LEGACY OF DYING THOUGHTS

FROM

AN AFFECTIONATE OLD PASTOR

TO

HIS FLOCK,

ON THE

COMPREHENSIVE BAPTISMAL ARTICLES

OF

FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST.

Go we therefore and teach all nations bantizing them &c.

Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them &c.
Matth. xxviii 19. 20.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonithing one another in Pfalms and Hymns, and Spiritual Songs; singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.' Co. i. 16.

Knowing that I must shortly put off my tabernacle; I will endeavour that you may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance.

2 1 et. 1 14, 15.

Price to those who are able, and inclined to purchase for themselves, or by way of short easy reading, on Lord's Day Evenings, to aid their Household Servants, Two Shillings in Boards.

AIR:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. & P. WILSON.

1796.

Would you judge rightly of the goodness of an opinion? Then value it by the tendency that is in it, to advance the life of God, 2 Pet. i. 4. By this same tendency, judge also of all your enjoyments, riches, honours, liberties, friends, health, children, &c. and value them, if it be possible, only under this consideration. Let no man glory in men, for all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's, 1 Cor. iii. 21, &c. This is to live upon the same design with God himself. To be followers, Eph. v. 1. or imitators rather, of him, as dear children.

There is a common obligation upon every person, to be active in his sphere, for the interest of the name and honour of God, and to render his life as useful as he may, more particularly under a sense of their own desciency in several accomplishments, whereby others are better sitted to serve their generation.

Mr. Samuel Shaw's Immanuel. Preface.



AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

TO

Mrs. MACRAE GAIRDNER

OF MOUNT-CHARLES,

IN HUMBLE AID, AFTER DEATH,

TO CARRY ON THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

OF A

YOUNG, NUMEROUS, HOPEFUL FAMILY,

BY HER UNCLE,

THE AUTHOR.

SCRIPTURA facra non data est hominibus, præsertim Christianis, ut se invicem perpetuis disputationibus ex ea resellerent, ac damnarent: paci destinatum opus hoc est, et mutuam caritatem atque tolerantiam ubique spirat, atque inculcat. Variationes illæ in tenuissimis plerumque apicibus consistunt, ut vel legatur $O\Sigma$, vel $O\Sigma$, vel $O\Sigma$, vel $O\Sigma$, vel $O\Sigma$, ut articulus item vel opponatur, vel omittatur. Quis enim sanæ mentis credat sapientissimam atque benignissimam Dei providentiam ab istis apicibus, qui aciem oculorum sugiunt, res tanti momenti, æternam nimirum salutem, vel perniciem hominum suspendere voluisse?

Westernii, Nov. Test. Tom. 11. 864.

ndad odadadadad ad adilipsi bashibi bashibi bashibi ba

IN ENGLISH.

The holy Scripture was not given to men, especially Christians, that out of it they might consute and condemn one another in endless disputations. The design of it is, to promote peace; and from beginning to end breathes and inculcates mutual love, and forbearance. These variations generally consist in very small marks, (dots or points) so that we may either read OΣ or ΘΣ, ΚΣ, or ΧΣ; and that the Greek article may either be prefixed, or omitted. Now, what person in his senses can suppose, that the all-wise and benevolent providence of God intended, that an affair of such vast importance as the eternal salvation or destruction of mankind should depend upon these marks or points, which are apt to escape the observation of the quickest sight?

PREFACE.

THE thoughts which follow, and have been committed to writing, in the near view of an eternal world, may be understood as that dostrine in sum which the Author has taught both publicly and from house to house, for nearest to fifty years; whilst he endeavoured, through holy meditation and prayer, to ripen in judgement with the increase of life.

They may serve to evince, how far, in a space so much lengthened out beyond common, the divine counsel hath been faithfully declared, with all humility of mind, and tears at heart too over manifold insirmities. At a time when religion, as one says, doth stand upon tip-toes threatening an awful remove; one solemnly and affectionately bound to so great an interest should do what is possible for him to strengthen that which remains, in a part of the world, where both its name and spirit have before shone with peculiar eminence. Remember them (a), who have spoken unto you for ages

' past, the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

'Great is the mystery of Godliness. God was ' manifest in the slesh, justified in the spirit.' (b) 'So far as effence or manner of existing is concerned, an attempt to explain would have been prefumptuous, 'fince fecret things belong to God (c); but those things which are revealed belong to us, and to our children for-'ever.' With regard to the Father, it is most justly and devoutly faid, 'Canst thou by searching find him out (d)? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as ' high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The meafure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the fea.' With regard to the Son, 'no man knoweth him but the Father (e); and with regard to the Holy Ghoft, or spirit (f), For what man knoweth the things of a man, fave the spirit of man which is in him? Even ' fo, the things of God knoweth no man, fave 'the spirit of God.' Leaving mystery, therefore, to fuch as have boldness for this fort of undertaking; I would humbly speak, and to the best of my power, upon the personalities of each.

b 1 Tim iii. 16. c Deut. xxix. 29. d Job. xi. 7, 8, 9, e Matth. xi. 27. f 1 Cor. ii. 11.

And, if ever the nature and uses of these, according to scripture, should be made light of by any; they do, in so far make light of their chief baptismal articles; even that mercy (g), which was provided in the love of God, to save us, by the correspondent 'washing' of regeneration and 'renewing of the Holy Ghost.' Or, which is the same thing (h), 'the answer of a good 'conscience towards God.'

Yet, with hope of far better things, and in dread prospect of that hour, which must be very nigh to fome, and cannot be at any great distance from the youngest, when we shall fee one another's faces no more; I would bequeathe this my probable last printed Publication, by way of keep-sake, to most of you an unexpenfive one. And, though it may happen to please him, 'whose I am, and whom I am 'bound' for a few days more 'to ferve,' even under 'labour and forrow (i);' this, it may be lawfully apprehended, must be taken by way of a supply for the wifely enjoined and useful work of annual Ministerial Visiting: which God, of his infinite goodness, long continue to be an honour to our Country.

What an aged Pastor doth crave from his beloved people is, that only a section or two, at

g Tit. iii. 5. h 1 Pet. iii. 21. i Pfal. xci. 10.

most, be read by those who have least leisure; and being much in a scripture way of evidence, that it be thought of, in so far, as dictated by a divine spirit. Thus mixed with faith in them that read, who knows but it may 'become quick and powerful, (b) piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit; a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.'

Finally, dear brethren, pray for a willing ferwant, who has not ceased to pray for your affectionate parents, and their offspring. Nay, for numbers since who, possibly, if not for certain, know us less. As one who had not another moment to think upon earth, either for himself, or for what is next dear to him, 'I com-'mend you to God, (c) and to the word of 'his grace, which is able to build you up, and 'to give you an inheritance among all them 'which are sanctified.' Amen.

WILLIAM DALRYMPLE.

Air, July 16, 1796.

P. S. From the natural near connection of scripture subjects, some texts are repeated oftener than once; which those who are upright in saith will not regret, as it affords a strong argument in support of the whole go/pel truth. Indeed it should seem rather delightful to the pious. 'O' how I love (d) thy law? It is my meditation all the day.' b Heb. iv. 11. c Acts xx. 32. d Psal. cxix. 97.

ARTICLE I.

e;

at

di-

at ck

di-

er

r-

2/-

for

n,

er

n.

nof

id

m

E.

ub-

ch

ds

th.

y.'

٠ ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠٠ - ١٠٠

CHAP. I.

OF GOD.

HIS BEING AND PERFECTIONS.

SECTION I.

HIS BEING.

FAITH has respect to what doth already exist, and yet is not seen (a). Thus, says St. Paul (b), 'For in him, that is God, we live, and move, and have our being: for we also are his offspring. Now without such faith, it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.'

a Heb. xi. r. b Acts xvii, 18.

But wherefore so believe? Abstracting from other arguments, which the bulk of mankind cannot easily sollow, the scriptures do often refer us to God's visible works; and thus bring the matter to a level with the meanest capacities. It may and should be asked, whence are we? And whence were all around us? How were they begun? They could not be the causes of their own existence! Tracing each of them ever so far back, their original must be one Infinite and eternal Being,— himself made of none.

· For every House is builded by some man (c), but he

that hath built all things is God.'

Any thing above childhood may follow out fuch clear and fure argument. 'I am that I am (d), necessary, independent is, therefore, the glorious unrivaled name, styled, along with other ivine perfections, the invisible things of God; 'He left not himself without witness (e; in that he did good, and gave us rain from Heaven, and fruitful feafons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (1).2 The Heavens, in particular, 'declare his glory, and the Firmament sheweth forth his handy-work (p). voice of nature, in these verses, and what follows, may be understood as so many loud and distinct tonguer, faying, A God, a Got, all over. The more enlarged that people's acquaintance is with his furrounding works, the more fully they will be understood to express themselves. The young ought to be familiar with those texts mentioned, and likewise with Psalms viii. lxv. and civ.

After which, the Fool in his heart only will fay, 'No God (h).' Let us come unto him, for regular solemn wor-

e Heb iii. 4. d Ex. iii 1 ... e Rom i 19. f Acts xiv. 17. g Pial xix 1. h Pial xiv. 1.

r arillow,
and
paciAnd
gun?

must must he

clear ndeyled, that ruit-(f).' the The may faythat

No wor-

ves.

ion-

17.

ship. Happy all who begin in time. They who feek me early shall find me i. How dull and wretched must they be, who are insensible to the beauties which encompass them! They that are far from thee shall perish, but it is good for me to draw near to God (k). Join every tongue and heart, that we may declare all his works.

md-d-d d-d-d-d-d>->->->->->->->->-

SECTION II.

GOD a SPIRIT.

To believe this, is the proper ground-work of all pure 'religious worship (1). By looking into our own frame, which is spiritual in part, and just as well known from thought as bodies themselves are by touch or sight, we conceive that spirit which is divine. The properties of matter do not belong to this. 'Behold my hands and my feet (m) that it is I myself: handle me and see, for a spirit hath not slesh and bones, as ye see me have.' How much superior this last is needs no proof. 'Ye have neither heard his voice,' that of God, nor seen his shape (n).' Though capable of emblematical outward declarations, he is invisible, 'dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see (o).'

To whom, then, will ye liken God? Or what likeness will ye compare unto him? For as much as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think, (p)

i Prov viii. 17. k P.al. lxxiii. 27, 28 l Jo. iv. 24. m Lu xxiv. 39. n Jo v. 37. e I Tim. vi. 15, 16. p Acts xvii 29.

that the godhead is like unto gold, or filver, or stone

graven by art, and man's device, the Divine Spirit is

immense, and the source of every other. 'The Father

of lights, without any variableness, or shadow of turn-

ing (q)."

Hence rites, or bodily ordinances by themselves, he can take no pleasure in. 'If I were hungry I would not 'tell thee, for the world is mine, and the sulness there'of (r).' The best outward services under the law were mere 'shadows of good elements (s) or rude principles (t). A preparation for nobler exercises to the human mind, when more advanced. The spirit of the Gospel is free and ennobling, like that of an Heir, or Son come to years.

Understanding and good affections are now all in all.

Even real felt heat without knowledge is deception; the produce of fine founds, or fights, without i leas, transient and useless. 'O fend out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me (u).' Emotions from thence are lively beneficial. What is it then? 'I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, I will sing with the understanding also also (x) Thus likewise ought we to real, hear, and communicate; the mind ever determining the heart.

Figures of feeing, going, and walking, when applied to God in scripture, are expressions of government, wisdom, acts, accommodating themselves to present human weakness. For the same reasons outward signs were made use of under the Old Testament.—'I saw alo (invision) the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and listed up, and his train filled

q James i. 17. r Pfal I. 12. s Heb x t t Gal. iv. 3. u Pfal. xlii 3. x I Cor. xiv. 15.

tone it is ther urn-

not erewere

man free ars.

the fient, , let vely irit, fing ding and

d to acts, For ader ting

v. 3.

lled

the Temple (v). How impiously absurd, therefore, to represent him who is an Instite Invisible Spirit, by images! Flattering modes of speech, in worship, are likewise wrong, and apt to be abused. Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself; but I will reprove thee (w). Of course, weak childish substitutions are abominable; like expence of money, pains, fastings, and so on, in place of pure mental worship and good works (x).

SECTION III.

4000 cuencucies (400) bub bub bub.

GOD INFINITE.

EHOLD, the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee (y)! How solemn and how affectionate! How useful, and joyous! Clear yet incomprehensible! As God exists by a necessity of his own all persect nature, he can neither be limited in regard to time or place! Every where and in every period he is the same: 'For of him, and through him, and to him are all things (z).' In him we live, move, and have our being (a).' But wherever action is, there must be presence.

Where wast thou (b), when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. My Father worketh hitherto and I work c; he pervades, animates, and supports the whole. O Lord, thou hast fearched me and known me d. Thou knowest my down

v. Ifa. vi. t. w Pat. 1 21: x Hof. vi. 6. y I Kings vili 27, z Rom, xi. 6. a Acts xvii 28. b Job xxxviii 4. c Jo. v. 17. d Pfal. cxxxix. I, &c.

fitting, and uprifing; thou understandes my thoughts afar off: with a great deal more of like devout elegance. But what follows is amazing! Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or, whither shall I see from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand uphold me. It is supposed that a single ray of light may sly millions of miles in the sixtieth part of a minute; a swiftness which we are not

Am I a God at hand, faith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? faith the Lord: Do not I sill heaven and earth? Though they dig into hell (f), thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down (g)! Beyond these descriptions, neither words nor mind of man is sufficient to extend.

able to follow, even in thought.

Nor should any man conceive, that it is beneath divine purity to be present where persons and things are polluted; seeing God is not material. Whatever be the manner of his sensations, nothing painful can affect him. His throne, though peculiarly glorious in heaven, excludes not any where else his essential presence. Devout souls are, in like manner, his special temple.

How distinguishing an attribute is that of infinity?

Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad?

f Jer. xxiii, 23, 24. g Am. ix. 2.

Where are the gods of Sepharvaim (h), Hena and

· Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

· Because the Syrians have said, The Lord is God of

the hills, but he is not God of the valleys; therefore

will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand,

and ye shall know that I am the Lord (i).

hts

out

all

thy

re:

fI

er-

ne,

fed

the

not

od

t I

ven

iall

ea-

efe

ent

di-

pol-

an-

Tis

not

in

ty?

How ridiculous, even to contempt, is affecting to give outward shape to him who is supreme and universal? What a ground, rather, for pure spiritual obedience? 'All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do (k). He is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (l); God shall judge the secrets of men (m), by Jesus Christ (n), awful, tremendous, clear doctrine!— 'Thou, God, seest me? And how shall I do this great wickedness (o), though concealed from every human eye, and sin against

'God?'
What a hideous, criminal foo', is the hypocrite? 'Ye
are they which justify yourselves before men, but God

knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the fight of God.'
Consider well Matth. vi. from the beginning. Masks
and disguises will but serve to aggravate guist in the end;
and stripes, of course. Shame and everlasting contempt will
be their portion (p). A God ever at hand, is a ground of
just considence to the upright. 'Happy is he, whose hope

' is in the Lord his God (q).' He will grant what is best upon the whole, and in fit season.

h 2 Kings xviii 31. i t Kings xx. 28. k Heb. iv. 13.

l ver. xii m Rom. ii 6 n Compare t Cor. iv. v,

o Gen. xxxix 9. p Pfal, cxlvi, 2. q Dan. xii. 5.

SECTION IV.

wind of oftend of other persons)

GOD ETERNAL.

O attribute, relative to the Supreme Being, is more difficult to apprehend, than this of his everlastingness, and yet, the truth thereof is as clear, as that the world could not possibly exist without a cause. eternal, God must have been Creator, and Creature, at one and the same time. More than this needs not be faid.

The Scripture ideas are full of beauty, and folemnly affecting. 'I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and

- ending, faith the Lord; which is, and which was, and is
- to come (s). The eternal God (t); The high-and lofty
- one that inhabiteth eternity (u.! What an amazing,
- · awful, venerable thought (v)! The bleffed and only
- potentate; the King of Kings and Lord of Lords;
- who only hath immortality." The great "I am,
- that I am (x); that is existing in and of myself.
- Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou:
- ' hadft formed the earth, and the world; even from ever-
- · lasting to everlasting thou art God(y). They shall perish,
- · but thou shalt endure (z); yea, all of them shall wax:
- old as a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change
- them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the
- fame, and thy years shall have no end (a).' How tremendous! How transportingly delightful!

t Deut. xxxiii. 27. s Rev i 8. u Ifa lvii ts. x Ex: iii 14. y Pfal. xc 2. z Pfal cii. 25. v 1 1 im. vi 5, 16. ver xxvii.

What a shocking degradation to the Supreme Being then is the doctrine of idols? So properly flyled lying vanities! · Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be any after me (b) Having had no cause, he can have no successor, no equal, no similitude. Though for a time he may defer, yet he will execute all his promises! Beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years; and a thousand ' years as one day (c).' His decrees and purpoles, therefore, are not to be measured by our ideas of time Their accomplishment is as certain, as if already done. 'And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them (d). Wait for this, O Christian, and doubt not. He will come, in that feafon which is fittest, and will not tarry. in the Lord, and patiently wait for him (e).

re g-

Je.

ot '

le:

d

'The Lord is not flack, as some men count flackness, but long-fuffering to us-ward; not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' Afterall, we know him that hath faid, vengeance is mine, and I · will repay, faith the Lord (g) It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (b).' Gofpel laws abide eternal, even as their author! 'Till Heaven and Earth pass one jot or one title shall in no wife pass away, till all be fulfilled (i, The Lord Jefus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance of them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (1. Trust in the Lord, ye Saints of his, for ever : ' For with

d John xvii 22. b Isa. xhii 10. c 2 Pet. iii, 8 e Pfalm xxvii. 7. f 2 ret iii 9, g
i Marth. v 18 k . Theff 1 7, 8. g Heb x 30 h ver 31.

- the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength (x). The
- eternal God is the refuge, and underneath are the
- everlaiting arms y). The mercy of the Lord is from
- everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him; and
- his righteousnels, unto childrens children (z).

SECTION V.

nd idea distincted and his be being been been

GOD UNCHANGE ABLE.

HE whose existence depends upon none; must himself be 'fovereign, absolute, independent, without variableness, or shadow of turning (a). I am
the Lord (b), I change not.' His essence ever was, and
must be the same. He has no equal in power, far less
superior, to alter this. 'The king eternal, immortal,
invisible (c). The incorruptible God (d).'

His commands, or will, are likewise immutable as himfelf; or 'endure for ever (e).' They are all for the best. Even elementary ones lead to perfection; where at length they are 'fettled for ever (f)' in heaven. The decrees of his government, with regard to good and bad, are unchangeable. His 'counsel standeth for ever (g). 'He is of one mind (b). Therefore now, amend your 'ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the Lord your God (i).' Mutability, from weakness, he is an entire stranger to; though, when men repent he will not execute threatenings. 'It is impossible for God to

x Ifa. xxvi 4. y Deut xxxiii. 27. z Pfal. ciii 17. a Jam. i. 17 b Mal. iii. 6 e t Pim. i. 17. d Rom. i. 22. e Pfal exi. 3 f Pfal, exix. 89. g Pfal, xxxiii. 11. h Job xxi . 13. 1 Jer xxvi 10.

· lie (k). The gifts and callings of God are without repentance (1). These shall go away into everlasting

punishment (m), but the righteous unto life eternal.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked (n)

Unspeakable ground of consolation, to the good: The righteous Lord loveth righteousness (0); his countenance doth behold the upright. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil (p). We have had fathers of our flesh (q) which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits, and live? ' If God be for us (r), who can be against us? We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God (s), and there shall in nowise enter into it (the new Jerusa'em) any thing that defileth, or maketh a lie (t), but they which are

SECTION VI.

nemented of statement about the purpose proproper

written in the Lamb's book of life.

GOD IS ONE.

TT is written (a), thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. There is onone else (b).' This idea, is the most simple we can imagine How can two, or more infinites, exist at one and the same time? Two eternals? Two unchangeables?

k Heb vi. 8 1 Rom xi. 19. m Mat xxv 46. n Gal vi 6. o Pfal xi 7. p Pfal. xxxiv. 16. q Heb. xii. 9, r Rom viii 31, t Rev. xxi 47. a Mat. iv. 10. b Deut. iv, 39 s verse 28.

What the one has the other would want. He who is all-persed has not an equal.

Look to the frame of nature, and see, if there be not manifest connection through every part. All from the same author or supreme contriver. This conclusion will appear unavoidable from an attentive perusal of Psalms viii. ix. lxv. civ. 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God (c), I am the first, and I am

- the last (d), and besides me there is no God. I know
- onot any (e). This is life eternal (f), to know thee
- the only true God. To us there is but one God, the
- · Father g), of whom are all things, and we in him.
- Who is above all, and through all, and in you all (b).

The invariable rule of worship, then, is to give this, in supreme degree, to none other. The Father seeketh such to worship him (i). And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do (k); that the Father may be glorisied in the son' How easy of apprehension is all this! Idol worship is grossly criminal. Creation beauties themselves, are no sufficient excuse to alienate the mind from God. Let instruments have their due; but their origin, with us, be every thing. Helps to the imagination, if used at all, ought to be with watchful care. Truth and spirit, without these, are infinitely preferable (1), even high swelling words, in devotion, have been prejudicial. Simplicity is a prime ornament. Superstitious dread is peculiarly improper, importing the deity to be cruel. Unto you that sear my name (m)

c Deut. vi. 4. d Isa xliv. 6. e verse 8. f John xvii. 3. g i Cor. vii. 6. h Eph iv 6. i John iv 23. k chap. xiv. 13. l John iv. 24, m Mal. iv. 2.

fhall the fun of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings.'

10 is

be

rom

fion l of

ord am

WO

hee

the

m.

1.

lis.

eth

ıſk

ay

on

on

te

:

10

ul

e-

n,

t.

g

)

الرابو الرابو الرابود والله المابو المابو المابود الما

SECTION VII.

GOD INFINITELY WISE.

THE Lord is a God of knowledge (a); and by him actions are weighed. These ideas are familiar amongst men, and contrasted to ignorance. How little in comparison do the wiest of us know? But God is light itself, and the sather thereof to both angels and men b): By means of this, we see him altogether amiable! Remove knowledge and every thing is lest in horrors!

He that planted the ear (c), shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that teacheth men knowledge, shall he not know (d)? Where wast thou (e, when I laid the foundation of the earth? Declare if thou hast understanding, who laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? and much more here to the like purpose. Means and ends, throughout all nature, are most fitly adapted to each other.

How are ancient predictions, and fince that time clearly fulfilled, to be accounted for, but by infinite wifdom? 'I, the Lord, fearch the heart, I try the reins.' He requires no steps to knowledge; but sees the whole at once. What veneration is due to this? 'We are but

a 1 Sam ii. 3. b James i. 17. c Pfal xciv. 6. d verse 10.
e Job xxxviii 4

of yesterday, and know nothing. The little that we have is derived, or from above (f). Pride of understanding was never made for man? God is to be acknowledged in all our ways, and firmly trusted in. He cannot be imposed upon. By him thoughts, as well as actions, are weighed.

If iniquity be in thine hand (g), put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles; for then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot (b), thou shalt be steadfast, and not fear. There may be knowledge, without application, whereas true wisdom improves regularly. In this best sense, God is comparatively the only wise (i).

CONTINUED.

Being everlasting, as well as almighty, God can depend upon none; but possesses all means in himself. How should he then be missed? When unsearchable, it is owing to our ignorance. Yet much both may and ought to be understood. O Lord (k), how manifold are thy works! In wisdom thou hast made them all. Sing unto the Lord with Thanksgiving 1): Sing praise upon the harp unto our God, who covereth the heaven with clouds, who prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains, and fo forth.

Man, the chief of God's works upon earth, he governs by a most singular method of wisdom. 'The inspiration of the Almighty hath given him understanding (m).'

f James i. 17 g Job xi. 14. h ver 15. i I lim. i 17. k Pfal. civ. 24. l Pfal. cxlvii. 6, &c. m Job xxxii. 8.

at

of

be

Te

as

у,

or

u

יש

es

y

d

W

S

y

e

1-

d,

IS

n

Still more bright, by lively written oracer. 'The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the foul (a); the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. More to be desired are they than gold p), yea, than much sine gold: sweeter also than honey, and the honey-comb. Moreover, by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them, there is great reward. Wisdom is the principal thing (q). Therefore get wisdom; and with all your getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she will promote thee. She shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.'

How adorable! How conciliating! And, whereas human nature is weak, liable to offend, obnoxious to punishment, he who is the only wife and good affures pardon to the humble, with every other needful aid, to accomplish a reform. Let the wicked forfake his way (r) and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have ' mercy upon him, and to our God, he will abundantly pardon. As I live, faith the Lord God, I have no * pleasure in the death of the wicked (1). Yea, being jus-' tified freely by his grace (t), through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness through the remission of sins 'that are past, through the forbearance of God.' How benevolent! How condescending! 'both have

n Rom ii 14, 15, o Pfal. xix. 7, &c. p verse 10. q Prev. iv. 7, &c. r lsa. lv. 7. s Ez xxxiii. 11. t Rom. iii. 24, 25.

'abounded towards us, in all wisdom and pru'dence (u)!'

Behold death too abolished! Life and immortality brought to light! How abfurd the error of those, who overlook the prime sole cause of such astonishing effects! Blessed is the man that heareth the voice of superior wisdom! whose sindeth her sindeth life! And shall obtain favour of the Lord (x).

SECTION VIII.

mene remember direction but brother but ber

GOD INFINITE IN POWER.

E acquire power by degrees, and, by this means, come easily to understand what it is. Angels excel in strength (a); and yet, compared with Gol, are but as grown up children. 'He maketh his angels 'spirits; his ministers a staming fire b).' Himself is made of none. He is strength everlasting, 'Great and 'of great power c). For he spake, and it was done; 'he commanded, and it stood fast (d). By the word of 'the Lord were the heavens made (e), and all the host 'of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth 'the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth 'up the depth in store-houses.'

His method, according to Moses, was gradual; and each part of Creation by a simple will. Let them be and they were (f). Thus exhibiting a pattern of order. Also, that we might better apprehend the beauties and

u Eph i 7, x Prov. viii. 34, &c. a Psal ciii 20. b Ps civ. 4. c Psal, xiv. 5. d Psal xx iiii 9, e verse 6, 7. f Gen i.

uses of the Creation. At once, the greatest and the best 1 adorable Potentate! Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the

- · Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights.
- · Praise ye him all his Angels: praise ye him all his:

hofts (g).

With God nothing is impossible. What imports a contradiction, carries no idea in it; as for example, to lie and (peak truth, at one and the same time (b). It can, therefore, be no diminution of divine happiness, to govern the world. Small and great are the fame to him. How, then, can his ease be disturbed? 'The Lord reigneth (i), elet the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof. He is clothed with strength wherewith he hath girded himself (k). Thy throne, O Lord, is established of old: thou art from everlasting (1). Though 'clouds and darkness,' at times, 'are round about him (m); these only take their rise from our present narrow capacities. 'Righteousness and judgement are the habitation of his throne.' One time, or other, all will appear to have been fitly established: when the heavens shall declare his righteousness,' and the people see his glory. 'Ye that love the Lord, hate evil (n)."

What a bitter thing, in the end, must it be, to oppose him who is 'great, and of great power (0)?' Being infinitely wise, also he must vindicate the honour of his laws 'Fear not them which kill the body (p, but are not able to kill the soul: rather fear him which is able to destroy both the soul and body in hell. Who know-

g Pfal exlviii. 1, 2. h compare 2 Tim. ii. 13 Heb. vi 18. i Pfal. xevii 1. k Pfal, xeiii. 1. l verfe 2. m Pfal xevii. 2. n verfe 6, 40. o Pfal. exlvii. 5. p Mat. x 28.

* eth the power of thine anger (q)? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. Weak must every scheme be that hopes to elude this. 'Jesus came to save his people from their sins (r);' and not in them. 'To redeem them from a vain conversation (s). If we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more facrifice for sins (t). For this purpose the son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (u).'

ne-ene e-e-e-e-e-e-ppm) >->->->-> >-

GOD INFINITELY HOLY.

SECTION IX.

AND one feraphim cried unto another (a), Ho'y, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name! for thou only art holy (b). That is, separated from impersection, and eternally conformed to right. He who made man capable of such discernment, must do so beyond measure. His love is the origin of all substitute relations; which require to be 'justly dealt with. He is the rock (c), his work is persect: for all his ways are judgement: a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.

Glory ye in his holy name (d): let the heart of every one rejoice, that feek the Lord. Thy testimoinies are very sure (e): holiness, O Lord, becometh thine house for ever. The Lord preserveth all them

q Pfal, xc. tt. r Mat. i. 21. s 1 Pet. i. 18. t Heb. x. 25. v 1 John iii. 8. a Ifa. vi. 3. b Rev. xv. 4. c Deut, xxxii, 4. d Pfal. cv. 3. e Pfal xciii. 5.

even all who, being mutually bound, were not true, just, faithful. To be boly is the only proper ground for rational enjoyment. It is the divine image itself (f); 'be ye holy, for I am holy (g). Scripture belief and practice' must ever be unwelcome to all who do evil. And this is the condemnation (h).' How can ever the cause of insidelity, then, be sustained? 'He that hateth me, hateth my sather also (i). Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness (k). Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart (1).

SECTION X.

GOD INFINITELY JUST, OR RIGHTEOUS.

THE Lord is righteous in all his ways (a),' to proportion people's enjoyment, to the measures of their religious virtue. Whereas, 'the face of the Lord (b) is against them that do evil. Upon the wicked he will rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an 'horrible tempest (c): this is the portion of their cup.'

How equitable are the divine laws? 'He hath shewed 'thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord 'require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God (d)? To fear God,' then, 'and to keep his commandments, is,' at once, 'the whole duty' and whole happiness 'of man.' It is his

e Pfal cxlv. 20. f Eph iv. 24 g r Pet i. 16. h John iii. 19. 20. i John xv. 23. k Pfal. xxx 4. l Pfal. xcvif. 11. a Pfal. cxlv. 17. b rfal. xxxiv, 16, e Pfal. xi, 6. d Mic. vi, 8.

'prime privilege. According as his divine power (d)

hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and

godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath

· called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto

'us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these

' you might be partakers of the divine nature.'

Follow God, said an enlightened heathen. And a more sure word of prophecy, 'be ye followers rather 'imitators of him (e), as dear children. Be ye perfect, even as your father, which is in heaven, is perfect (f). As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves 'according to the former lasts in your ignorance (g).' In proportion to the number of entrusted talents, each must give an account, at last (b). 'As every man hath 'received the gift (i), even so minister the same one to 'another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of 'God. He which soweth sparingly shall reap also 'sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap 'also bountifully (k).'

'The Lord is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love which ye have shewed towards his name (1), in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren (m), ye have done it unto me. The same way regard will be had to different natures and degrees of vice. After 'thy hardness and impenitent heart (n), treasurest up for thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God. Take, therefore, the

d 2 Pet i 3, 4. e Eph. v. 1. f Mat. v. 48 g 1 Pet. i. 14. h consider well Rom xii 6, &c. i r Pet. iv. 10 k 2 Cor ix 6. l Heb vi. 10. m Mat. xxv. 40. n Rom. ii 5. o Mat. xxv. 28, 19.

talent from him (i), and give it unto him that hath

ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be

given, and he shall have abundance: and from him

that hath not shall be taken away even that which he

hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into utter

darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The idea of equitable retribution exposes the horrible one of an arbitrary predetermination. Let no man say,

when he is tempted, (k) I am tempted of God, for God

cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any

man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn

away of his own luft, and enticed. If our Heart con-

demn us (1), God is greater than our heart and knoweth

all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then

have we confidence towards God. O Lord, are not all

thy ways equal?

Fret not thyself because of evil doers (m), neither be

thou envious at the workers of iniquity. For, they shall

foon be cut down like the grafs, and wither as the

green herb. Surely thou didit fet them in flippery

places: thou castedst them down into destruction!'

Now we fee through a glass darkly, but then (n)

face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall

know even as I am known.' A state of trial must

have unequal distributions. The discipline of faith and koliness requires it. 'There remainesh therefore a rest

for the people of God(0). Affliction cometh not forth of

the dust; neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.

(p). Commit thy way unto the Lord (q); trust also

i Matth xxv 28 29. k Jam i. 13. l Jo. iii 20, 21. m Pfal xxxvii 1. n r Cor xiii 12. o H.b. iv 9. p Job v. 6, q Pfal, iii, 5, 6.

• in him, and he shall bring it to pass, he shall bring forth
• thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgement as the

' noon day.'

How apt are men to mistake the glitter of outward things for a mean of sure permanent delight! Yet experience teaches, for certain, that this is not in them. But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself (w). Lift up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. A little that a righteous man hath (x) is better than the riches of many wicked. Great peace have they which love thy law /y, and nothing shall offend them! Their right principles and firm virtue are the sure earness of a future everlasting inheritance. Seek first the king-

merenenenenenenenenenen merenen bis 200 bis

things shall be added unto you.'

SECTION XI.

GOD INFINITELY GOOD.

SCARCELY for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man one would even dare to die (a)? Such a person is not rigorous but abates in many cases of his just claims, to advance human happiness. He is affectionate disinterested. Like God, 'he giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not (b)' He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever (c).' What an emblem upon earth of Almighty love.

w Pfal. iv. 3, 6, 7. x Pfal xxxvii 16. y Pfal. cxix. 165. z Matth. vi. 33. a Rom. v. 7. b Jam. i. v. c rfal. cxii 9.

th

ne

·d

i-

t

e

Let us often reflect how wide and constant divine munificence is. 'He maketh his fun to rife on the evil and
on the good (d); and sendeth his rain on the just and
on the unjust. Every good gift, and every perfect gift
is from above (e). For, of him, and through him,
and to him, are all things (f)!' Conviction, like proofs,
ought to be familiar. Benevolence must have been the
prime spring of acting in the deity. 'God is love, and
dwelleth in love (g)' How softening a charm to infinite grandeur! separated from this every divine attribute
would overwhelm us.

In comparison, 'there is none other good but God (b).' Transcendently perfect, underived, unchangeable! 'Who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompenced unto him again (i)? The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works (k)!' What a bleffed employment, to furvey the divine operations in nature, providence, and grace! Yet, how small a portion of these are we able to comprehend! O benign God, thy heavens aftonish us! 4 They declare thy glory (1) There is ono speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth. The earth also is full of thy riches; so is this great and wide fea, wherein are things creeping and innumerable, both fmall and great beafts. These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due feason. Thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good (m). Much respect is due to this whole divine composition, from the beginning. Besides things

d Matth. v. 45, e James i. 17, f Rom xi 36. g 1 Jo. i v., 6, h Luke xviii, 19, i Rom, xii, 31, k Pfal, cxlv, 9, l Pfal, xix, 1, 3, 4, &c, m Pfal, civ, 24, 25, 26, 27,

effential, like grafs for the cattle, and herb for the fer-

vice of man (n); thou causest the earth to produce

wine, that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to

make his face to shine! Behold the fowls of the air,

how your heavenly Father feedeth them. Confider

the lilies of the field, how they grow; fo that even So-

· lomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of

· thefe (0).

'Thou hast made man a little lower than the angels,
and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou

" madest him to have dominion over the works of thy

hands; thou hast put all things under his feet. O

Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name (p)!

After all, 'Eye hath not feen (q), nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things

which God hath prepared for them that love him.

Herein is love, (r) not that we loved God, but that

· God loved us, and fent his fon to be the propitiation

for our fins. Who hath faved us, and called us with an

holy calling (s); not according to our works, but ac-

cording to his own purpose and grace, which was given

us in Christ Jesus before the world began; but is now

· made manifest, by the appearing of Jesus Christ our

· Saviour, who hath abolished death and brought life

and immortality to light through the gospel.'

Let us hold by proofs like noon-day, and leave the rest to him who is goodness itself! Be careful for nothing,

but in every thing, by prayer and supplication with

· thanksgiving, let our requests be made known

' unto God.' And the peace of God, which passeth all

n ver. 14 15, o Matth, vi, 26 28; 9 p Pal, viii. 5, q 1 Cor ii, 9, r 1 Jo, iv, 10, 5 2 Tim, i 9, 10.

fer-

uce

to

ur,

ler

0-

of

s,

u

y

0

i-

t

understanding, shall keep our hearts and minds, through Jesus Christ (t).' If, through weakness, folly and vice, we have erred, let us make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord. He that spared not his own son, (u) but delivered him up to death for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things? The Lord God is a son and shield, the Lord will give grace and glory (v), and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Beloved, if God solved us (w), we ought also to love one another. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit!' who can be indifferent to the force of such arguments?

SECTION XII.

GOD INFINITE IN MERCY.

'M ERCY is a branch of goodness, and supposes either want or guilt. In the case of want, separated from guilt, mercy is quick to grant relies. Even where guilt is, as much as possible, 'it rejoiceth over 'judgement (a),' withholds rigour, defers punishing, mitigates, extenuates to the utmost! Among men such grace is to be found! In Almighty God still more! With him are bowels of mercie, translated tender (b), 'The Lord 'is long suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin (b, 'while yet the impenitent shall by 'no means be cleared (c).'

Thus do all the good, upon earth, forgive, unless where public regard, do not permit. He who is the author of

t Phil iv. 7 8. u Rom. viii. 3 t. v Pfal. lxxxiv. 12 w 1 Jo. iv 11. 2 Jam. ii, 13. h Luke 1. 78. c Num, xiv. 18.

this most amiable frame must possess the same in supreme persection. Every act of moral divine administration must be understood in consistence with this. Indeed, his very name is merciful and gracious! (d) 'Yea, his memorial to 'all generations. His whole paths are mercy and truth together (e).' Like as a father pitieth his children, 'so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He will not always chide (f), neither will he keep his anger forever.'

The above, through all ages, may have had regard to the Lamb flain, in divine purpose, from the foundation of the world! Behold, in him 'set forth to be a propitiation, 'through faith in his blood (g),' a completing evidence of this most needful destrine. 'God, who is rich in mercy, 'for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in fins, hath quickened us together with 'Christ. And hath raised us up together, and made us 'fit together (h), in heavenly places. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness (i), and their fins and their iniquities I will remember no more.'

What room, then, is left for despondency! All that is required is, that 'people repent and turn to God, and do 'works meet for repentance.' The voice of immutable love is, 'As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die (k)?' And under the new testament, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and I will give you rest (1)!' To despair, then, would be to ascribe faisehoo! to the faithful and true witness; want of mercy, to him who is great in it. 'Verily' judgement is his strange work (m).'

d Ex. xxxiv. 6 e Pfal. xxv 10. f Pfal. ciii, 13, 9. g Rom. iii. 25, h Epr. ii. 4, 5, 6. i Heb viii. 12. k Ezek. xxxiii. 1 f Matth. xi. 28. m Ifa, xxviii, 21.

Æ

0

Till death comes, he corrects in mercy. And, after that, ' they who have fowed in tears shall reap in joy (n)! Bleffed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted (0). Let us imitate him who thus Theweth mercy! Let us forbear to punish. When the end is gained, speak no more of the cause; so shall we be numbered with the elect of God, as holy and teloved (p). Let us gratefully reflect upon the nature and number of our forgiven offences; faying, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits (q). Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thy difeafes.' In the face of fuch mercy Afill to offend is peculiarly ruinous. A measure of ingratitude, black with the most hideous future prospects. ' Or, * despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, 4 and long-fuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God e leadeth thee to repentance. But after thy hardness and impenitent heart (r), treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God' Compare with this, Prov. i. 24. and Heb. x. 26, &c.

SECTION XIV.

GOD INFINITELY FAITHFUL AND TRUE.

As the divine promises are 'exceeding great and pre'cious (a),' they are sure to be fulfilled; for 'his
'words are true and faithful (b).' Being infinitely wine
he must see things as they are; and therefore be ever well
affected to the good. His power none can resist. Such

n Pfal. cxxvi. 5. o Matth. v 4. p Col. i ii 2. q rfal. ci ii. 2, 3. r Rom, ii 4, 5. a 2 Pct. i, 4, b Rev. xxi. 5.

correspondence of mind and word is a chief human excellence, and must be persect in him who is their original.

'He cannot deny himself (c). He cannot lie (d). O

Lord, thou art my God, I will exalt thee, I will praise

thy name (e): thy counsels of old are faithfulness and

truth.'

Only conditions unperformed do forseit his engagements. Bleffed are they that do his commandments (f), that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. To as many as receive him (g), to wit Christ, to them he giveth power to become the children of God.' Such are the proper foundations of trust; 'Whereas the Lord will abhor the ' bloody and deceitful man (b).' Said an eminent Heathen, ' If God were at any time to become visible, he would choose light for his body, and truth for his foul." And now, O Lord God, thou art that God (i), and thy words be true. All his paths are mercy and truth, to fuch as keep his covenant (k). Thou halt redeemed " me (1), O Lord God of truth. The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious (m), and long-fuffering, abundant in goodness, and in truth. Hath he said (n) and shall he not do it? or, hath he spoken, and shall he onot make it good? The strength of Israel will not lie, or repent (o). In hope of eternal life (p) which God, that cannot lie hath promised.'

The import of that threatening (q), 'Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die,' is, become mor-

g Jo i 12. h Pfal v 6 i 2 Sam vii 28. k Pfal xxv. 0, 1 Pfal xxxi 5. m Ex xxxiv. 6. n Num xxiii. 14. o 1. 2 am. xv 29. p Tit. i 2. q Gen. iii 3.

made, treated as finners. The history in 1 Kings xxii.

doth fignify no more than that God, in awful justice, would permit a 'lying spirit to seduce King Ahab.' So Pharoah, by a like permission, did harden his own heart. The same way we are to understand Jer. iv. 10. 'Ah, Lord God, surely thou hast greatly deceived this people!' That is, suffered them to err. All Hebraisms, and peculiar to an infant language.

0

ſe

d

t

The Prophet Jeremiah (u) doth admirably well explain conditional threatenings. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil,' or change my measures. Hence we are clearly bound to give our affent to all divine revelations. 'He that believeth hath fet to his feal that God is true (v).' Whereas, ' he that believeth not (w), hath made God'a liar.' Ah, hideous guilt! How can they escape? (x) A careful use of our best powers may, and ought to be depended upon. Remember this (y), and thew yourselves men!' To hope for promised blef-Jings is at once, also, duty and privilege. God is faithful (z). Compare Pfal. lxxxiv. 11. 1 Tim. i. 15.. 2 Tim ii. 11, 12. Heb. x. 23. The wicked have no. part nor lot in this matter."

D: 35

v. Heb. ii. 2. w 1f2. lvi. 8, v 1 Cor. x. 13.

SECTION XV.

GOD IS OVER ALL BLESSED.

things (a). He, who maketh angels and men happy, must himself be infinitely so. 'With thee, is the fountain of Life (b)!' Knowledge to discern the means, and power to execute. Having no superior there can be no room for sensations of envy, or malice. It is thus with the completest moral characters upon earth. Whereas, 'the Devil was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth (c). So Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his brother (d): and wherefore slew he him? because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. But God is love 'e)!' Therefore, the 'Blessed and only potentate (f)!'

How great is the comfort of this belief! He could nave no other end in creating, but to diffuse happiness. He beholds the blessed with complacence. His end is answered by them! 'And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good (g)!' That is, sit for delight. How full of consolation to live under such benevolence, such perfection!

He who gives hope, and longing desires after future good, doth surely intend to gratify them. He is too able and indulgent to excite affection, only to disappoint it. Even penitence is demanded for the offenders' good, 'according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God (b)!' Without sincere obedience there can be no pure, rational

Rom. xi. 36. b Pfal xxxvi. 9. c John viii. 44. d 1 John iii. 12. e chap. iv. 8. f 1 Tim. vi 15. g Gen, i 31. h 1 Tim. i 11.

enjoyment. 'Be ye followers,' imitators 'of God (b), as 'dear children?' In the way of opposing that divine nature, there can be no peace (i). Things without us, as mean, have their value; but, as an end, are vanity and vexation of spirit. 'Wherefore spend your money for that which is nought (k), and your labour for that 'which profiteth not? Incline your ear, and come unto 'me; hear, and your soul shall live! Yea delight itself in fatness.'

all

en he

is,

be

us

e-

d c-

W

)-

e,

ď

.

S

e

t

h

SECTION XVI.

44 4 4444 4 44 \$ his so behind his his

THE WISDOM OF KNOWING GOD.

IT is true glory and happiness to acquaint ourselves with him who is sole supreme: Then, the powers of the soul have their proper use. Revelation discoveries must ever accord to these. 'He is the father of both lights (a). Try the spirits (b), whether they be of God, or not! He who is holiness itself, can never be imposed upon by mere outward forms. The design of all religion is to assimilate man to his own nature. How great is the pleasure of such an assurance (c)! 'He that despiseth (d), despiseth not man, but God!'

Means, as such, ought not to be left undone, but to subserve the 'weightier matters of the law (s).' Some people's moral ideas are by far too imperfect; as to affect doing justly, loving mercy; to the neglect of a 'humble walk with God (f). Belief, knowledge, and worship' do render the whole body of duties compact. Others

h Eph v r. i compare 1 Pet. i. 14, &c. k Ifa. lv. 2, 3, a James i 17. b 1 John iv. 1. c 2 Pet. i. 4. d 1 Theff. iv. 7. e Matth. xxiii 23. i Mic. vi. 8.

would build without a foundation. A capital ruinous error. Yea, if we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness (f), we lie, and do not the truth.

Paternity and dominion have the most undoubted extensive claims; 'a son bonoureth his father, and a servant his master (g). If then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear?' To live, as without God in the world, is quite unnatural. It exhibits an idea of horror. 'But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself (h).' Those of an opposite character would soon destroy the social compass. 'Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men (i).'

Enthusiasm and superstition are foes to real piety. The one is rapture, without ideas; the other, a slave to such as are wrong. 'But God hath not given us (k) the spirit of fear, but of power, and of a found mind.' Supreme unchangeable goodness is congenial to upright religious virtue? 'Happy is the man that findeth wishom. Whoso findeth me, findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul; all they that hate me, love death (1).'

f. 1 John i 6. g Mat i 6. h Pfal. iv. 3. i Pfal: xil, 1., k a. fim, i, 7, l. Prov, iii, 13, viii, 35, 36,

CHAP. II.

THE RELATIONS GOD STANDS IN TO MAN.

SECTION I.

GOD GREATOR.

BY the word of the Lord (a) were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth. His will and his word are quite the same.

'Let them be, and they were (b). He that hath built all things is God (c).' A fundamental relative relation.' Mere matter cannot move. Mind, or wisdom must be taken in. 'The Lord possessed me in the beginning of

his way (d), before his works of old. I was fet up from everlasting.

'He spake and it was done (e); he commanded and it stood fast.' The adequate knowledge of God's works may require eternity itself. How worthy an employment to be here begun? An increase of desire, ensures subsequent gratification. In the progressive account given by Moses, human weakness is condescended to; that, with leisure they may go on, to see, admire, and adore, 'how things which are seen (f), were not made of things which appear,' either in their present form, or differently before that.

a Pfal. xxxiii. 6. b Gen. i 3. c Heb. iii. 4. d Prov. viii. 22, 23. e Pfal. xxxiii 9. f Heb. xi. 3.

How unreasonable are both Polytheism and Idolatry—the belief of more Gods than one, and the worship of that one true God by images. Creation is a clear compact work. An infinite everlasting spirit cannot be wrought into shape. Glory, dominion, and thanksgiving, are his sole eternal due, 'For his pleasure, they are and were 'created (g).' If creation gives enjoyment, the intelligent part thereof ought to serve him. No right whatever can possibly rise above this, 'If I be a father (b), 'where is my honour?' Such exposulation is unanswerable. Capacity imports a debt; and much more when proper calls and opportunities are added.

How humble before God should every created nature be! The feraphims themselves do 'cover their faces (i)' in his presence. They know and feel their comparative imperfection. The best use of every thing around, or within us, is to lead the soul to himself; 'to seek the 'Lord (k), if haply we may feel after him, and find, 'though he be not far from every one of us!' What an unnatural absurd thing must it be, 'to live without God in the world (!)!' To be upbraided, in effect, by every thing we see and hear; by every morsel of food, by every cooling drink.

Furthermore, we had fathers of our flesh, who corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not
much rather be in subjection unto the father of spirits and live. He, for our profit, that we might be
partakers of his holiness (m). Blessed is the man that
endureth temptation (n), for when he is tried, he shall
receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him!

g Rev. iv. 11. h Mat i. 6 i Isa vi. 2. k Acts xvil. 27. 1 Eph. ii. 12 m Heb xii 9, 10 n James i, 12,

SECTION II.

GOD PRESERVER.

As existing of God (a), so through his upholding goodness are all things. Another inestimable relative attribute. Like as a father pitieth his children (b), the Lord pitieth them that fear him. If ye, being 'evil,' or imperfect, 'know how to give good gifts unto your children (c), how much more shall your father which is in heaven,' the inspirer of pure parental affection, 'give good things to them that ask him?' Sovereign productive will could never design any creature to be independent of himself.

Such as are without fensation require no more than to be continued. Those having power to feel must have instincts, or principles, in their nature, to seek their food, defend, and propagate. Such as are free to act, like men, are provided with capacities or powers, for which they must be accountable.

A wise good proprietor is delighted with every new beneficent execution. 'It is more blessed to give than to receive (d),' said he, 'who went about continually doing good (e). The brightness of the father's glory, and the express image of his person (f).' He who depends upon none has every thing depending upon himself. He may occasionally stop his own general laws, or vary them. 'Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them out of their distresses.' The whole composition is sublime and com-

a Rom, xi 36. b ria ciii. 13. c Mat. vii 11. d Acts xx. 35. e chap. x 38. f Heb i 3.

fortable. 'The righteous shall see it, and rejoice, and 'all iniquity shall stop her mouth (g). Whoso is wise, and will observe those things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord,'

To Omnipotent Omnipresent love, the care of a who'e universe can be no matter of toil. Willing and doing with him are quite the same; 'for in him we live, and move (h) and have our being. We are also his offspring.' Mutual inanimate connections, and dependences, fill us with astonishment. The moon, for its light, upon the sun; the tides, upon both. All heavenly bodies gravitate, the less to the greater. By this means too, they perform their long swift courses; so as to produce admirable necessary vicissitudes. They inspire a thirst to 'know even as we are known (i),' which, from this very circumstance, we may be certain will take place. 'In thy light 'k), shall we see light.'

The whole body is kept entire, without our own personal knowledge. 'As thou knowest not what is the way of the 'spirit (1), nor how the bones do grow in the womb of 'her that is with child, even so thou knowest not the 'works of God who maketh 11. Thou hast possessed my 'reins (m); thou hast covered me, in my mother's womb. 'I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully 'made. Marvellous are thy works, and that my soul 'knoweth right well. How excellent is thy loving-kind'ness, O God (n), therefore the children of men put their 'trust under the shadow of thy wings.' Ah indevout Theorist, how difficult is it to bear with thee!

Our divine governor is unspeakably judicious! His laws

g Pfal cvii 6, 42, 43. h Acts xvii, 18 i -1 Cor. xiii. 12, k Pfal xxxvi. 9. l Eccl. xi 5 in Pfal cxxxix. 13, 74 n Pfal xxxvi. 7

are equitable! His ordinations profit! Corrections themfelves 'yield the peaceable fruits of rightequiness (o)!

Are not five sparrows sold for two Farthings? And not
one of them is forgotten before God. But even the very
hairs of your head are numbered (p). Let us muse, and
give praise. Let us trust, and say, 'Here we are, do with
us what seemeth good in thy sight (q).'

menene and reverse response somewholes so

SECTION III.

GOD A GOVERNOR.

THE kingdom of Jehovah extendeth even to inanimate creatures; but has a special relation to such as are intelligent. He governs them by laws. They are free to act, and, of course, accountable. 'For when the Gentiles, which have not the written law, do by nature the things contained in the law; these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves (a). If our hearts condemn us, much more God who is greater than our heart, and who knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not (b), then have we considence towards God.

Things amiable and beneficial must ever be binding. No found mind but dislikes the reverse of sobriety, justice and god-lines in others. Be ye not as the horse (c), or as the mule which have no understanding. Many forrows shall be to the wicked. He hath shewed unto thee, O man, that which is good (d); to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. These things are not only good, but profitable (e).

A fure check upon all vice, is unfeigned piety. 'To fear

b I John iii. 20, 21. c rfal. xxxii 9, 10 d Mic. vi. 8. e l'it. iii. 8.

God and to keep his commandments,' from thence (f) is the who'e duty, and the whole happiness of man. Be ye followers 'imitators rather, 'of God, as dear children (g).' How pleasant! How beneficial! To partake of the divine 'nature (h).'

Such measures of conduct govern angels, as well as men. In aid of virtue, we may both be angry and grieve (i). Benevolence doth strongly prompt to what is generous. It cannot otherwise be blessed. How urgent are the parental, and all the relative feelings? Patriotic love leads to great actions. Throughout the whole, how judicious is the moral government of God! 'Wisdom's ways (k) are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace! Great peace have they which love thy law (1), and nothing shall offend them. Righte-ousness exalteth a nation (m), but sin is the reproach of any people?

Extraordinary calamities are the usual effects of extraordinary private and public crimes. Shame is a suffering next to inseparable from vice. 'What fruit had ye then in those things (n) whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end of these things is death.' Few people, if any, are able to sin, above reflecting borrors. Cheering bope is the portion of the good. 'The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death. Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace (o).'

SECTION IV.

FROM supreme universal dominion, the relative attribute of judge must follow. Thought and reslection bring f Eccles xii 13 g Eph. v. I. h 2 Peter i. 4: i Mark iii. 5. k Prov. iii. 17. 1 Pfal. cxix. 165. m Prov xiv. 34. n Rom, vi. 21: p Pfal. xxxvii. 37.

re

ne

n.

20

d

S.

1-

h

.

t

f

,

t

t

consciousness along with them, as to moral good and evil.

Outward changes make none here, 'still conscience bears witheness, either excusing, or accusing (a).' What else is this, but the voice of God? A vicegerent, to determine rewards and punishments, agreeable to prevailing disposition? Compare 1 Jo. iii 20, 21. 'Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: The heavens shall declare his righteousness:

(b) 'for God is judge himself. Say among the heathen (c), the Lord reigneth: he shall judge the people righteously. He will be justified when he speaketh, and clear when he judgeth (d).'

So, under the Gospel, but much more particular (*); the Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a surnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.' Compare with this ver. 47, &c. Chap. xvii, 31, &c. 'The times of ignorance (f) God winked at, but now commandeth all men every where to repent. Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.'

Christ, our delegated judge, went through all states of temptation, and knows how to distinguish. 'As the Father hath life in himself: so hath he given to the son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgement, because he is the son of man (g).' A constitution of grace, peculiarly relieving to all who are upright. And that servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepar-

e Mat. xiii. 41, &c. f Acts xvii. 30, 31. g John v. 26, 27.

ed not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes (b)! Others with sewer. Re-wards and punishments will be weighed out with an even balance. Every man according to his own labour (i)! He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly (k); and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully!

Ah, what folly to neglect eternal recompenses! 'Who knoweth the power of thine anger (1)? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.'

SECTION V.

THE FATHER BEST KNOWN FROM CHRIST.

PHILIP faith unto Jesus (a) shew us the father, and it sufficeth us Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works? How pleasing is such an idea! The incomparable mind of Christ is not dazzled by it. He honours his unequalled gifts as communicated. He whom the Father hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him. The father loveth the son (b), and hath given all things into his hand. Behold my servint whom I uphold (c), mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgement unto the Gentiles (d).

h Lvke xii, 47, 48. i 1 Cor iii. 8. k 2 Cor. ix 6. l Pfal xc. 11 12.

2 John xiv 8 &c. b Joln iii 34, 35 c lfa. xlii, 1.

d compere Luke iv. 18, &c.

Well might Jesus say, 'I seek not mine own glory, but the glory of him that sent me (e).' After the cure of a dreadfully insane person (f), 'Return to thine own house,' said he, 'and shew how great things God hath done unto thee.' Most exemplary reverence and humility I So, 'they gloristed God, saying, that a great prophet is risen up among us (g); and that God hath visited his people.' Himself was no less sweetly conscious of the divine presence, and ready to acknowledge it. 'As the father knoweth me, even so know I the Father. Father (b), glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both gloristed it, and I will glorify it again.

Thus, 'the Father loved him (i), because he laid down his life for the sheep.' In short, the Father is all in all to him, Marvellous Jesus! And marvellously approved to the last. Behold, by him 'God made manifest in the sless (k). The image of the invisible God (1), the sirst-born of every creature.' Head or chief. 'Brightness of his glory (m).' What less than divine inspiration could keep up close to the accounts of such a character, as the express image of God's person in human form?

e John xvii. 18. f Luke viii 39. g chap. vii. 16. h John x. 15 xii, 28.
i John x. 17. k 1 Tim. iii. 16. l Col. i. 15. m Heb. i. 3.

OF CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

A PROPHET.

SECTION I.

EXPECTED BY THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

"COME, see a man,' said even the woman of Samaria (a), 'which told me all things that ever I 'did. Is not this the Christ?' In that very character, he was foretold by Moses (b): 'The Lord thy God will 'raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of 'thy brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken!' He was to be, 'seed of the woman (c).' A descendant of faithful Abraham (d). One of superior nature totally would not have answered. He behoved to be a 'partaker of slesh and blood. In all things made like unto his 'brethren (c), sin only excepted.'

At the same time to be intimately united with God (f). One who could discern spirits, to be familiar with distant events, do things miraculous, be inhabited by the God-head bodily (g), or substantially. Hence, a truly divine manifestation (b), a mystery of godliness, ever till then. Beyond

a John iv. 29. b Deut. xviii. 15. c Gen. iii. 15. d Gen. i. 2. 3. c Heb. ii. 14, 17, f Mat. i. 23, g Col. ii, 9. h t Tim iii. 1, 6,

these ideas what power of language, or thought either, can earry any one? How amazing, to hear 'Christ say in a 'word, and heal' the absent 'centurion's servant (i).' Again (k), 'Go thy way, the devil is gone out of thy daughter.' Again (l), 'I will, be thou clean, and immediately his 'leprosy departed. And he came and touched the bier (m), 'and said, young man, arise; and he that was dead sat up, 'and began to speak: and he delivered him to his mother. 'Lazarus come forth (n). And he that was dead,' and buried, 'came forth.' Was he pot warranted to say, 'he 'that seeth me, seeth him that sent me?' Close, unexplicable union!

Go your way (0), and tell John what things ye have feen and heard, how that the blind fee; the lame walk; the lepers are cleanfed; the deaf hear; the dead are raised; to the poor the gospel is preached; and blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me. If thou be not the Christ, who art thou? said the Priess and Levites from Jerusalem (p); importing clear and general expectation at the time. Upon this was founded the wise men's question from the east; where is he that is born king of the Jews? and the chief Priess and Scribes return, In Bethlehem of Judea (q).

A Roman heathen historian hath said, that the whole east then did teem with such a belief. The sulness of time was come (r), when the day-spring from on high was to visit mankind (s), to give light to them that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the way of peace. The people were in expectation, and

i Luke vii. 7, &c k Mark vii 29 l Luke v 13 m Luke vii. 14, 15. n John xi. 43, 41 xii 45. o Luke vii. 22, 23 p John i. 19, &c. q Mat, ii. 2, 5. r Gal iv. 4 s Luke i. 78, 79. iii. 15.

'all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not?' A strong presumptive evidence to Christ's divine mission, and that of his dostrine. No such character, either before or since, hath appeared. How dangerous, to neglect him (t). 'And it shall come to pass (u), that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.'

SECTION II.

mi ded ded adad apropropropropropropro

CHRIST, AS A TEACHER, MUCH NEEDED.

A CCORDING to ancient prophecy, Christ was to be an universal saviour. 'So it is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation, unto the end of the earth. I will bring near my righteousness (a), it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I will place salvation in Zion, for Israel my glory.' Both very suitable to good old Simeon's words: 'A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. A salvation prepared before the face of all people (b).'

The Gentiles, or Heathens, were ignorant, and grossly idolatrous. These who were civilized as to other arts and sciences, had no religion sit to speak of. They had Gods many, and Lords many (c), whom they did often worship by cruel unnatural sacrifices. Sometimes this too was sensure to an extreme degree. Certain of the more thought-

t Heb. ii. 2, u Acts iii. 23. a Ifa. xlix 6, xlvi, 18. b Luke ii. 32.

ful wished a reform; but could not see how it was possible and thus fell in with the multitude. Hence that shocking account in Romans i. from verse 19.

It may feem scarcely credible, but answers to the present state of other heathens still; and only where Christ appears doth true light shine. This makes its way into the hearts of the poor, as well as learned (d); to make good (e), 'all' shall know me, from the least to the greatest. Hearken, 'my beloved brethren (f), hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, 'which he hath promised to them that love him. I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for so it seemed good in thy sight (g).

'He that abideth in me, and I in him (b), the same bringeth forth much fruit? Such a believer will see, and venerate. One only living and true God. A father, to be worshipped in spirit and in truth? Believe and trust to unerring Providence. Be familiar with a perfect rule of life, assured of divine placability 'Of grace to help in time of need (i).' A covenant of pardon and aid, sealed in the blood of its glorious publisher.

How ravishing all this! death abolished too, by 'life and immortality brought to light (k).' Duty and recompense exemplified in God's own son. The worst of insidels, in their best hours, must revere such a dispensation. How came the noblest endeavours of every former age to be thus eclipsed? and that, by one of low outward estate, no education, no human means? 'Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound (1; 'they walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the

d Luke vii 22. e Heb. viii. 11. f James ii. 5. g Matth. xi 26. h John xv. 5, iv. 24 i Heb. iv. 16. k 2 Tim. i. 10. l Pfal. lxxxix. 15, 16. day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.' In all Christian countries, those full of faith have been the most shining characters. And from such the gospe! is best understood. How dreadful to oppose, or even to 'neglect so great a falvation (m)?' They cannot escape. 'He that believe the on the son of God (n), hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his son. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth me, hateth my father also (o).'

SECTION III.

THE WAY OF CHRIST WISELY PREPARED.

OHN BAPI'IST'S Person and Office is thus foretold, ' the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the defart a high way for our God (a). Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.' Though mostly figurative, the words are capable of an eafy spiritual application. The humble and contrite are encouraged. All ground of despair is taken out of the way. Loftiness of pride is brought down. Oblique fraudulent arts are threatened. As also rash passionate wrath. Thus, as in the case of literal pioneers, the way is prepared for Christ's admission. And without repentance, none can derive benefit from him.

m Heb ii, 2. n 1 John v, to. o John xv. 22, 24. a Ifa. xl. 3.

But when John saw many of the proud Pharisees, and unbelieving Sadducees come to his Baptism (b), he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to slee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. All are accountable, who have knowledge and freedom to act. The ax of divine justice is listed up, to hew down the impenitent, as prejudicial trees, only sit for the fire.

'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven, against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men (c)!' Good works too are essential. 'Christ came not to destroy the law, or the prophets (d), but to sulfil.' To make pious and moral duties well understood, and to enforce them. 'His name is therefore called Jesus. He was manifested to destroy the works of the devil (e). Repentance and faith,' sum up the gospel-doctrine (f). These and the remission of sins, are to be preached in his name (g), among all nations.'

Awake, thou that sleepest (b), and arise from the dead, and Christ will give thee light. If grace be withstood; probation, by death, will soon close. The fan is in his hand (i), and he will thoroughly purge his sloor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Now is the accepted time (k), behold, now is the day of salvation. Who can boast of to morrow (1)? Man knoweth not his time (m): as the sishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it salleth suddenly upon them.

b Mat. iii. 7, 8, 10. c Rom. i, 18. d Mat. v, 17. i, 21. e 1 John iii, 8. f Acts xx, 21. g Luke xx.v, 47. h Eph, v, 14. i Mat. iii, 12. k 2 Cor, vi, 2, l Prov, xxvii. 1. m Eccl, ix, 12,

SECTION IV.

CHRIST INAUGURATED.

HEN all the people (a) were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized and praying, the heaven was opened; and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, thou art my beloved fon, in thee I am well pleased.' Jesus, though he had no fin to confess, would honour John as a prophet. Then, as above, was he entered upon sacred office.' Though the shape, in which divine illumination was communicated, was bodily; yet the form is not ascertained. It might be luminous, or stery, like what befell the apostles, asterwards (b). The soft manner of a dove was fitly chosen, to characterize the gentlenes of Jesus and the spirit.

Now more enlightened than ever, and owned from above, the Baptist might well fay, 'And I knew him not (c); 'but he that fent me to baptize with water, the same said 'unto me, upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending 'and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and ever after that, 'bare record, that this is the son of God.' The multitude saw and heard enough, to excite their attention; though less clear, it is probable, than in the case both of Jesus and his forerunner.

Behold, the wonderful confistancy of scripture narrative, even where things were out of the line of all former thought as well as experience. No studied ornaments are made use of, to embellish these. They are lest to speak for themselves. A stupendous scene indeed! Yet carried on

a Luke iii, 21, 22 b Acts ii, 1, &c. c John 1, 33, 34.

uniformly, afterwards, without the smallest aid from literature. Subsequent miraculous facts are now naturally supported. Surely the hand of God is here!

ae

y-

e-

a

d

10

n.

e

LS

1-

):

e

e,

d

g

h

t,

h

r

e

n

Sacred influences are likeliest to be met with, in a way of divine ordination. Or, by a regular use of his own means. Bleffed is the man that heareth me (a), watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. Ask, and ye ' shall receive (b); ask of God (c), who giveth to all men 'liberally, and upbraideth not.' Special divine residence is with the meek (d). The dove-like spirit abides not with any other. 'The proud he feeth afar off (e).' None have a righteous call to facred office, who are disqualified. Inclination without literature will not do. 'We are of God (f), he that knoweth God heareth us. Hereby know we the truth, and the spirit of error? How much more ought we to hear the beloved fon of God himself! He ever will be delighted in, by all who would resemble the father. As many as are led by the spirit of God (g), they are the ' fons of God.'

SECTION V.

adjustingly- ofposter office describe ofposter

CHRIST SUPERIOR TO JOHN.

ITH great nobility of temper the baptist said to his disciples (b). 'He must increase, but I must decrease.' The lustre of his chief would in a very little while outshine his. 'He was declared to be the son of God with power (i). There were no limitations either as 'to his wisdom or strength in working. 'All things were

e Prov. viii. 34. b Mat. vii. 7. c James i. 5. d Pfal. xxv. 9. e Prov. vii 17. f t john iv. 6. g Rom. viii, 14, h John iii. 30, i Rom, i, 4;

'given into his hand (c). The fulness of the god-head bo'dily (d). So it pleased the father.' Many of his discoveries were new; just from heaven, or above all. He speaks
of these as a familiar.

'The only begotten, which is in the bosom of the father, he hath declared him (e).' His nature, government, purposes of grace or will. 'And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.' Rich, free, accumulated. This is the record that God hath given us eternal life (f); and this life is in his son.' He speaks of that, as an eye and ear witness. His words 'were new, sublime, authoritative (g); all in proof 'that the sather loved him surpresently (b).

Happy they who, like John Baptist, delight in the success of others. Such help to enliven the sable walks of life. Christ's origin, even as that of Adam, was by the immediate power of God. He could, therefore, bring into the world along with him no impure mixture. 'He increased in wisdom (i), and stature,' or age, 'and in savour with God and men. After baptism, the spirit of the Lord was upon him (k), to preach.' And compare chap. xlii. 1, &c.

The wife order of communication to Jesus, as man, might be gradual; so as to augment the delight of privileges. In time, he could and did say (1), 'all things are delivered to me of my father.' The visible manifestation of his glory, was then progressive, till he could say, 'it is finished (m). And so prepare 'for all power in heaven and earth (n).' For, 'to which of the angels, said he, at any time (o), sit on 'my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.'

Think what an honour God hath done to human na-

c J hn iii, 35, d Col ii, 9, i, 19 3t, e John i, 18, 16, f t John v, 11, g Mat, vii, 29, h John iii, 35, i I uke ii, 52, k Isa lxi, c, 2, l Mat, xi, 27, m John xix, 30, n Mat, xxviii, 18, o Heb, i, 13,

ro-,

16-

ks

r,

t,

ie.

d.

ve i-

3

i- d s

t

l

ture! 'Christians,' too, are 'God's building (p). Know 'ye not, that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, 'which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not 'your own! Both he that sanctifieth, and they who are 'sanctified, are all of one; for which cause, he is not 'ashamed to call them brethren (q).' Let us be consistent; 'for, if any man defile the temple of God (r), 'him shall God destroy.'

CHAP. II.

CHRIST'S DOCTRINE.

SECTION I.

HE ENCOURAGES RELIGIOUS INQUIRY.

WHEREVER there is danger of being mistaken, evidence ought to be the more maturely weighed; and they teach best, who let in this gradually upon the mind. The wisdom of God took that method to introduce our divine saviour, by appointing him a forerunner. 'And thou, 'child,' said Zacharias (a), pointing to his son, who was afterwards the baptist, 'shalt be called the prophet of the 'highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord,

p 1 Cor, ili, 9, vi, 19, q Heb, ii. 11, r 1 Cor. ili, 17, a Luke i, 76 &c.

to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of falvation to

his people, by the remission of their fins, through the ten-

der mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on

high hath vifited us.' So gradually did the fun of righteousness arise.

Himself too, did thus dawn upon, and illuminate the inquifitive, till they were fully guided into the way of peace. An agreeable example of which, among many others, may be seen John i. from verse 35. ' John stood, and two of

his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he

faith, behold the lamb of God. And the two disciples

heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus

turned and faw them following, and faith unto them, what

· feek ye? they faid unto him, master, where dwellest thou?

· He faith unto them, come, and fee. They came, and

faw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day.

· After which one of them faith to Simon, his brother, we

have found the Messiah. And he brought him to Jesus.

And when Jesus beheld him, he said, thou art Simon,

the fon of Jonah: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is

by interpretation, Peter, a pillar, or stone.

'The day following, he findeth Philip, and faith unto him, follow me. Philip findeth Nathaniel, and faith unto

him, we have found him of whom Mofes in the law, and

the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth. And Natha-' niel faid unto him, can any good thing come out of Na-

zareth? Philip faith unto him, come and fee. Jesus saw Na-

thaniel coming to him, and faith of him, behold an Ifraelite

indeed, in whom is no guile. Nathaniel faith unto him,

whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto

him, before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under

the fig-tree, I faw thee. Nathaniel answereth and faith

unto him, Rabbi, thou art the fon of God, thou art the

king of Ifrael.'

Happy iffues of teachable modest inquisition; as well as proofs of lenity towards their weaknesses. 'A bruised reed hall he not break; the smoking flax shall he not quench, he shall bring forth judgement unto truth (a). Then shall ye know (b), if ye sollow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and sormer rain unto the earth.' As then, 'so still, he carries the lambs in his bosom (c), and gently leads those that are with young. In his majesty he rides prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness (d).' To see, and converse with Jesus, out of his word, is the sure way to grow up 'in all things to him who is the head (e).'

SECTION II.

CHRIST'S DOCTRINE FULLY SATISFIES.

A LLUDING to common water, 'Jesus said unto the 'woman of Samaria, whosoever drinketh of this shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (f).' It yields pure immediate satisfaction to both mind and heart. Nothing preferable is left to hope for, or desire. It warms and sets in motion every active power of the soul to do good.

- · Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters (g),
- and he that hath no money. Here is grace for grace (b).
- Divine favour of all forts, and fuperabounding. Unto
- the poor the gospel is preached (i). Yea, blessed are
- a lfa, xlii, 3, b Hof, vi 3, c lfa, xl II, d Pfal, x'v, 4, c Eph, iv, 15
 f John iv, 13, 14, g lfa, lv, 1, 2, h John i, 16, i Luke vii, 22,
 F 3

The poor in spirit (k), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. He that believesh on me (l), as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. Consolation pure and inexhaustible. The doctrine of Christ adapts itself to the best of all human appetites; that for immortality. It removes every obstacle from gui't and corruption in the way thither.

No inferior enjoyment is sufficient to exclude this. The world, being alone, is too little for true spiritual thirs. Only an infinite good can answer, 'Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread (m)? And your labour
for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto
me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in satness.' More condescendingly still, 'incline
your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall
live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
even the sure mercies of David.' Where, save in Christ,
have we to look for such an object? 'Behold, I have given
him for a witness to the people, a leader and a commander to the people. This life is in his son (n).'

Him hath the father fealed (0). In Christ shall all be made alive (p). But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's, at his coming. Which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both fure and steadfast (q), and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.'

Then the well of living water reaches to the height of its origin. It springs up, in essence, the same; but still purer and more quenching by continuance. The life of beaven, in the end is the 'life of God,' or a 'divine na-

k Mat v. 3, I John vii, 38, m Isa, lv, 2, 3.4, n t John v, 10, o John vi 27, p 1 Cor. xv, 22, 23, q Heb, vi, 19, 20,

* ture (r). A crown of righteousness (s). Compare Psal, vii. ultimo. There is more in the New Testament, than in thousands of volumes. More bearts ease to an upright penitent soul. How sublime, pure, and durable, are the delights of religion!

SECTION III.

CHRIST'S DOCTRINE IS AUTHORIS-ED BY MIRACLES.

THE works performed by 'our bleffed Lord, no man 'could have done, without God (a). And we be-held his glory; the glory as of the begotten of the father.' No appeal to human reason could be more clear, simple, and popular. 'I will, be thou clean (b). How assonithing! All his supernatural works were beneficent, most of them open, and instantaneous. They are narrated without art; and have no encomiums. Enemies of the highest rank, strove to disparage; but had it not in their power to deny them.

How else could the world have been brought to a belief of his divine mission? Such a miracle, after he was crucified, had been greater than the whole former ones together. An admirable balance to his low outward estate. Then the eyes of the blind (c) shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desart.

In performing certain of his miracles, there was a conspicuous display of 'devout regards. And, looking up to

Ta Pet, i, 4, sa Tim, iv, 8, a John iii, 2, i, 14, b Luke v. 13, cilfa, xxxv, 5, 6,

- heaven (a), he fighed, and faith, Ephphatha, that is, be
- opened, and ftraightway his ears were opened, and the
- · string of his tongue was loofed, and he spake plain And
- before feeding five thousand with five loaves, and two
- · fishes (b); he gave thanks.' And, at the raising up of
- · Lazarus from the dead, Jesus lift up his eyes and said,
- · Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I
- knew that thou hearest me always (c).

He prostituted none of his mighty works to private affections. 'Jesus faith unto her,' that is, Mary his mother, who had said unto him, they have no wine; 'Woman, what have I to do with thee, in matters of this sort? Mine hour is not yet come (d).' There was also a grace in his whole manner. Sometimes a beautiful gradation, and in the sittest moment. And, 'when the Lord saw the widow at Nain (e), following the dead body of her son; he had compassion, and said unto her, weep not. And he came, and touched the bier, and said, young man, I say unto thee, arise. And he delivered him to his mother.'

He was ever prudently mild and condescending; 'healed 'all that were oppressed of the devil (f);' foresaw and provided against abuse: though grave, encouraged courteous civilities; did every thing well. In short, doth surpasse our best praise.

SECTION IV.

THE GANDID WERE MUCH AFFECTED BY HIM.

- A S Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching (g), and preaching the gospel of the kingdom,
- a Mark vii, 34, 35. b John vi, 11. c John xi, 41, 42, d John ii, 4... e Luke vii, 12 f Acts x, 38. g Mat. ix. 35.

and healing every fickness and every disease among the people; the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never fo seen in Israel (a). Nor could he be withheld often from dread of causeless, cruel, pharisaic censure; he casteth out devils by the prince of devils.

His miracles and doctrine were of a like healing nature. But neither of them could be endured by envy; which loves to feed upon wretcheiness. Leaders of this fort, are more malevolent than any others. They will dare both to biaspheme and murder. The multitude cannot be sufficiently aware of their influence. By their fruits ye shall know them (b). Inwardly they are ravening wolves.

SECTION V.

CHRIST'S WORDS SE ASONABLE and AFFECTING,

L VERY renewal of intercourse with an excellent pattern, warms and cherishes the best affections. Of
our blessed Lord, the Evangelical Prophet thus speaks, 'Behold my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted,
and extolled, and raised very high (c).' He never broke in
upon either extreme gries, or prejudices of a sudden; but
seems, as though inclined, for a time, to respect both.
What manner of communications are these 'd), that ye
have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?' He sinds
no direct sault, then, with the two disciples going to Emmans, for their forrows, and their impersect belies, which
led to them; but yields, for a time, to both. Their
wrong ideas were mixed with good sentiments. He pities
a mixed state of hope and sear.

Next, as they could bear, he fays to them, 'ought not a Mat, ix, 33, 34. b Mat. xv. 20 15. c Ifa lik 13, d Luke xxiv. 17.

'Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his 'glory (a)?' Afterwards, beginning at Moses, and all the 'prophets, he expounded to them, in all the scriptures, the 'things concerning himself.' The effects of his mild pradence, was their entire conviction. 'Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and 'while he opened to us the scriptures?' They now see with deep concern, 'how slow of heart they had been to believe?' Their hearts warm in proportion to the weakness, or folly rather, they had so lately suffered under.

They now bore him witness, as many others before them had done, 'and wondered at the gracious words which 'proceeded out of his mouth. So the officers' which were sent by the 'chief Priests and Pharisees to bring Jesus unto 'them (c), answered, never man spake like this man.' How blessed are they, who delight in the calm sober discussion of religious principles and rules? We have too short a life, for anxiety about smaller concerns; and ought, as much as possible, to 'consider and provoke one another (d) unto 'love, and to good works.' This gives many and good days to our present precarious existence. 'O house of Ja'cob (e), come ye, and let us walk in the light of the 'Lord.'

Another remarkable example we have of the above prudence in the woman of Samaria (f). Our blessed Lord knew, that though a gross sinner, she had some excellent qualities. To these he applies, with a view to her conversion. Her birth and education, among a mixed uncivilized people, were pitiable; and met with much forbearance! she is brought on, by degrees, to useful discourse; and the issue,

² Luke xxiv. 26, 27, 32. 25 b Luke iv. 22. c John vii 46.d Heb x. 24.

at length, becomes a faving one. 'She teaches transgressors 'God's ways,' and a multitude, thereby, are 'brought over unto him.'

SECTION VI.

CHRIST SKILFULL TO HEAL.

THEY that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are sick(g); that is, people spiritually diseased and yet ignorant of their sad state. Much skill is necessary here; and Jesus, in this view, is greatly to be admired. He discerns intuitively the maladies of the soul; and adopts his restorative means accordingly. He sees through outward appearances, and makes a nice, beneficial distinction.

The 'parable of the Publican and the Pharifee, leaves no room to felf justifying measures. The disease and the remedy meet at once together. 'I tell you, that this man,' who hardly dared to pray, 'went down to his house justified, 'rather than the other (h): for every one that exalteth him-'self shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be 'exalted.' With what address doth he meet the tempting lawyer? He is obliged, however unwilling, to answer himself! 'Go ye and shew mercy likewise (i).'

Joint attacks made upon his spiritual skill, are similarly confounded. The evil designing 'Herodians marvel, and 'lest him. And when the multitude heard his discourse to the Sadducees, they were assonished at his doctrine. In 'short, no man was able to answer him a word; neither durst any man, from that day forth, ask him any more questions (k).'

g Matth ix 12, h Lu. xviii. 10, 14, &c i Lu x 26. 37, &c. k Matth. xxii, 15, 22, 33, 46, &c.

At the same time, he prescribed his means of cure with gentleness, even to assonishment. 'Friend, wherefore 'art thou come (!)? Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man 'with a kifs? Suffer ye thus far, and he touched his ear, 'and healed him. Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for 'me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children, &c. 'Verily, I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with me in 'paradise (m!' How great in power! How great in healing excellence!

Our divine physician is remarkable for a good manner in every thing. He knew how and when to simpathize. He was ever sweetly affable, and yet ever mindful of his own d gnity. 'When he saw the multitude, he was moved with compassion; because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd (n).' So, from like compassion he said to the widow of Nain, following the corpse of an only child to his grave, weep not o? Yea, at one time, 'Jesus wept (p)'. And how great is he in such mark of friendship to a beloved family? From like goodness, too, he suffered and died!

Wonderful kind hea'er of distempered souls! He spurned not any of the numerous applications that were made to him, though the sight, in certain cases, behoved to be nauseous. He did eat with publicans and sinners, to do them good, at the expence of being calumniated (q). Adorable Josus! Both for skill and method, thou art altogether lovely! How much did he bear, from the slow apprehension even of his own Apostics? All along, he is properly aware of his dignified mission. He is above being dejected; above any thing mean.

l Matth xxvi 30. m Lul xxii. 48 31, 61, 62, 46 n Ma, ix 36.

• Lu. vii. 13. p J. xi 35. q Matth. ix x1.

'Many good works have I shewed you from my father;

(q) 'for which of those works do ye stone me? I ever

taught in the synagogue, and in the temple (r); why

askest thou me? Ask them that heard me. If I have

spoken evil, bear witness of the evil.' To one who had been
guilty of a very gross outrage; 'but if well, why smitest

thou me?' How worthy throughout is the Lord Jesus
of our esteem and admiration! Never any other was qualified
to heal, as he was Let us, by his word, consult him under
all our maladies. Compare Isa. lxi. 1, &c.

SECTION VII.

CHRIST'S METHOD WITH THE MULTITUDE.

ad adapt dad adapt ber ber ber ber ber

SAYS St. John, (a) 'when Jesus was in Jerusalem, at the passover, on the seast-day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But he did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men? or, as sollows, what was in man. Even the well affected at first, need time, with new endeavours to confirm them; else their weakness being wrought upon by evil arts, may prove greatly prejudicial to those who trust in them.

f

d

.

t

W

is

j-

g -

6.

What a remarkable evidence of this have we, Lu. iv. 22. compared with ver. xxviii 29.? 'And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.' And yet, upon telling them one single disagreeable truth, in but a few moments afterwards, 'all they in the synagogue were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he miraculously passing

1 Jo,x. 32. ch p. xviii, 20, 21 23. chap, ii. 23, 24

through the mids of them, went his way to Capernaum;

where the multitude were astonished at his doctrine : for

' his word was with power.'

Another remarkable example we have, 'in Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, Acts xiv. 13; where the heathen Priests would have done facrifice unto them as gods, and they with the people could scarcely be restrained;' nevertheless, in a few moments after, instigated by certain Fews. they stoned Paul, and drew him out of the city, supposing 'he had been dead.' So mobile are they, whose passions change with whatever is new. Jefus, wisely aware of this imperfection, was at pains to confirm his disciples; faying, (c) 'if ye continue in my words, then are ye my disciples indeed: · and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you 'free.' He knew, and it ought to be attended to by all, that there are those who hear the word (d), and anon with ' joy receive it : yet have they not root in themselves, but dure for a while only.' Such are not hallily to be confided in. Like natural tempests, they often spend themselves by their own force.

Gradual information, after the manner of Jesus is the best method of doing them permanent good. Hence prejudices, errors, and vice, are best overcome. A single instance of this fort is more creditable, than the rash applauses of a multitude. They become noble, manly and steadfast, who take time to digest evidence. A lesson of peculiar aptitude to the young and tender. Indeed to all who may have snares laid for them. And there went great multitudes, says St. Luke (e) ' with him: and he turned and said unto them, if any man come unto me, and hate not,' that is, love not less, 'his Father, and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and ' Brethren; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my dif-

c Jo. viii 31, 32. d Matth xiii. 20, 21. e xiv. 25, &c.

ciple.' This was plain useful dealing. It led to an honest brave profession.

m:

for

ind

ien

ind

er-

ws.

ng

0105

172-

if d:

ou

11,

th

ut

d-

Dy

eft

S.

is

ti-

ke

10

d

t.

if

ot

d

ſ-

Blessed be they, who instruct after this manner. Who lay a right foundation for seadfastness. Who trust not to the breath of an instant applause! who lead to the increase of zeal, with years and dissiculties. 'Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before (a), beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, To him be glory both now and ever.' Amen.

SECTION VIII.

CHRIST'S METHOD WITH YOUNG CONVERTS.

Our blessed Lord, in the beginning of real amendment, did not lay arduous difficulties, which might be avoided, before them: but proceeds by degrees, from what was more easy. He would not 'put new frisky wine into old leathern bottles,' as himself represents it (a). A fit lesson for all subsequent teachers. There is 'a time to mourn, and a time to rejoice; a time to weep, and a time to laugh (b); and each of these, are to be studied. The thread wern garment, will not bear to be filled up with what is new and strong. Behold, 'how the servant of the Lord,' in teaching, 'did deal prudently (c).'

For like reason, he made use of similitudes, which, for a while, were not fully to be understood. They stuck fast however in the memory, till time, and suture incidents, did serve to explain them. He knew not neither what it was to attack prejudices all at once, and in direct form; but, somewhat obliquely. This was not only lawful, but a 2 Pet. iii. 19, 18. b Luke v. 37. c Eccl. iii. 4, 36. d Ha. lii, 12.

highly expedient. Disgust, if possible, ought never to be exeited. Different situations admit of different means. Happy they who attend to this. It is enough, if the way be led to God and duty with success. A zeal, with knowledge, under implored divine influence, will not prescribe amiss. The reverse thereof is arrogant, bold, and provoking.

The clear scripture rules, supported by our bleffed Lord's example, are to be calm, 'apt to teach, patient,' even while we instruct those who oppose themselves (a!.' To restore them who be overtaken in a fault (b) with the · spirit of meekness. To bear one another's burdens; and fo fulfil the law of Christ. If strong (c), to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.' To beware of uncommanded austerities . To 'feed babes with milk, and not with strong meat (d).' Not even to over burden memory; but to aid rather by familiar phrases, and brief comparisons. As much as in us lies, to accommodate instruction to age and faculties; to catechife simply (e); To read lectures upon the history of him who did all things well: and whose life is the flandard of our religion. 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me (f).

'He did not cry, nor lift up (g), nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed he did not break, a smoking slax he did not quench. He came down like rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth.' So sweet and mild should every teaching parent be, having 'store of grace poured into their lips. Who is a wise man (b), and endowed with knowledge among you? let him shew, out of a good conversation, his works,

a 2 Tim ii. 24, &c. b Gal. vi. 1, 2. c Rom xv. 1. d Heb. v 12. e Prov xxii. 6. f John x. 27. g ifa xlii. 3, 4, lxxii. 6, xlv. 2. h James iii. 1 j.

with meekness of wisdom. Yea, all of you be subject one to another (a), and be clothed with humility.

X-

p-

e,

s.

8

n

e

;

r

o

5,

d

1

SECTION IX.

CHRIST'S METHOD WITH STRONG FAITH.

SON, faid our bleffed Lord to one of great belief and trust, 'be of good cheer, thy fins be forgiven thee (b). The object in view was truly pitiable; and one who had no doubt been a prime mover to the application made for relief. He might have become penitent, from his severe suffering; hears of a Saviour, and would be carried to him. Nor pain, nor dread of ridicule did prevent this. An illustrious pattern of faith! And amply recompensed.

He refutes no terms. Is willing to be declared a finner; and no less anxious for a firitual than a bodily cure. Jesus, therefore, instantly bestiends him. Fuith and charity together are his delight. And both are now before him, in the sufferer, and in the conduct of his generous friends. Their joint works were like prayer. And the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous did much avail (c). The Lord did raise him up.

There is a sweetness of manner in the address, indicating divine readiness to forgive. 'Son, be of good cheer.' What an high favour is this shewed through him to all suture ages! At once offectionate and dignified! He relieves, pardons with condescension and true majesty. In the sace of pharisaic pride, all this was done; and to that, he thus answers, 'Whether is easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee; 'or to say, arise, and walk (d)?' But the former method has

a 1 Pet. v 5. b Mat. ix. 2. c James v. 16. d Mat. ix. 5.

been taken, 'that ye may know, that the fon of man hath 'power on earth to forgive fins. Then, turning to the fick of the palfy, he faith, arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose and departed.' No wonder, when the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and gloristed God, which had given such power unto men (a).'

Equally great and good is Jesus here. He fears not, amidst captious cruel enemies, to appropriate to himself one of the most peculiar divine attributes. Nothing to buman weakness, can be more conciliating. Like him, let us advise, with generous beneficence. Let us consider one another (b), to provoke unto love, and to good works. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify God (c). See, and weep with them that weep (d) when nothing better can be done. Such sights lead to mercy.

CONTINUED

ONE under a loathsome, contageous distemper, said to our blessed Lord (e), 'If thou wilt thou canst make 'me clean.' A mark of strong saith, accompanied with other striking pious and moral beauties. Says St. Matthew, (f) 'he came and worshipped him,' as an eminent Prophet. He modestly besought à cure, urging his plea from this amazing conviction, that he needed only to will.

And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean; and immediately his leprofy was cleansed. What compassion! What Mujesty! He is fairer than the children of men (g); altogether lovely! Nor ought we to forget of him who is so powerfully gracious, that he is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever (g).

a Mat. x 2, 8. b Heb x 24. c Mat. v. 16. d Rom xii. 15. e Mari 1 46, f viii. 2. g Pfal xiv, 2. b Heb xiii 8,

h

k

0

r,

t,

2-

15

e

How fure must the pardon, assistance, and eternal life of a true believer be in such hands! 'If ye abide in me, and my 'words abide in you (d), ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. For it hath pleased the father, that in him should all sulness dwell (e). I the lord have called thee in righteousness, and will held thine hand; and 'I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, 'for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in 'darkness out of the prison house.'

At times, and for new exercise to fincere be ief, the Lord Jesus did seem to delay, if not even to shift applications from thence; yet never left them long without tender notise. The case of the two blind men is much in point (f). After suffering them, for a while to cry, 'thou son of David have mercy on us,' and putting a suitable question to them for the benefit of others, 'he touched their eyes, saying, according to your faith, be it unto you. And, immediately their 'eyes were opened.'

So, 'when there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, my daughter is even now dead; but come, and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.' Such power of belief meets with an instant favourable return. 'And Jesus arose, and followed him.' In the way thither, 'Beshold a certain' long afflicted 'woman came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment. For she said with in herself, if I may but touch his garment, I shall be made whole. Jesus turned him about, and said, daughter, be of good comfort; thy saith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour!' As for the ruler's daughter, in the midst of suneral rites which were

d Jo. xv. 7. e Col. i 19. f Matth, ix 29.

performing, 'he took her by the hand, and the maid

What wonder, 'if the fame thereof went abroad into all 'that land?' St Luke's account of another excellent Centurion, whose modesty was a great ornament to his besies, ought to be much read. He declares himself not fit to enter under a roof with him, because once he had been an idolatrous beathen, though his generous offices now pled for him! 'Jesus,' therefore, 'turning him about (g), said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not sound so great faith, no, not in Israel.' And as the master did wish, the servant was sound whole.

SECTION X.

mes essenting of the composition des

CHRIST'S METHOD WITH THE FEARFUL.

Some have not boldness to own truth publicly, even after they are convinced. Pity and arguments, however, must not be withheld. So, in the case of Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, (h) 'He came to Jesus by night, and 'said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles, except God be with him.' Here is candour upon the whole, mixed with timidity.

'Jesus answered and said unto him,' in persect suitableness to both, 'verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man
be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' This
leads to an explanation of belief with the heart, that would
confess Christ publicly. The same with being 'born of water, and of the spirit.' Hence a thorough obedience might
be expected; and nothing less would suffice. How mild

g Matth. vii. 9. h Jo iii. 1, 3, 5.

and gradual is the manner! How well adapted to give him a view of his own character! With all due regard to, faithfulness in office, he deals prudently (i). His wise and benign method of teaching is much to be admired. He lets in just as much light at once, as the person was able to bear.

Happy spiritual guides, who follow this example. 'Him that is weak in the faith (k) receive you; but not to doubtful disputations. We then that are strong (1) ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.' Nicodemus became bold, as appears from John ix 39 by suture diligence. He sought as he was able, at the time, and found needful aid. Night discipleship, though not sufficient, is one good step. A day visit, and truly noble one, as above, thid follow; for he brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, wherewith to honour the dead body of Jewi. 'The meek God will guide in judgement (m), and the meek he will teach his way. The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant.'

SECTION XI.

CHRIST'S METHOD WITH THE UPRIGHT.

PHILIP,' we read, 'findeth Nathaniel, and faith unto him, we have found him of whom Moses in the law (a), and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the fon of Joseph. And Nathaniel said unto him, can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, come and see. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming unto him, and saith of him, behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.' The proof of which great excellence,

i Isa, lii. 12, k Rom. xiv 1. 1 Chap, xv. 1, m l'f, xxv, 9, 14.

he then fully makes out to him; fo that ' Nathaniel faith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the fon of God, thou art the king of Ifrael.'

This bleffed iffue, and how Jefus speaks of Nathaniel with a kind of glorying, demonstrate the value of an upright, or fincere spirit; and what countenance it has a claim to in every age. No character, while we live in this world, can go beyond it. 'The righteons Lord (b),' again, (e) ! loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright. The Lord God is a fun and shield (d), the · Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. Their latter end is peace (e). Man can give no more, beaven requires no more.

Such people are plain and undefigning. They harbour no prejudices, with their knowledge. Their prevailing aim, and study, is to be good. When it is said unto them, 'Come and fee,' for these ends; forthwith they They are happy to renounce errors of youth or education; and to find access to blissful truth. Jesus is pleafed with them. He meets their bonest hearts, to forward their virtue.

What an eminent example of the whole, doth the above narrative fet forth? The point in question was momentous, and he treats it accordingly. He is favoured of the Lord, and brought to faving conviction. 'Being of the truth (f) • he heareth Christ's voice. He cometh to the light, that

- his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought
- 'in God.' Bleffed foul! An Israelite indeed! 'Thou
- fhalt see greater things than these (g): Heaven open, and
- the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son
- b Pfal. xxxii, 2. c Pfal. xi. 7, d Pfal. lxxxiv II. e Pfal. xxxvii. 7. f John xviii. 37, iii, 21. g John i. 30, 51,

- of man. If any man will do his will (e), he thall
- know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I
- fpeak of myfelf. The way of the just is uprightness, thou,
- most upright, dost weigh the path of the just (f).

SECTION XII.

CHRIST'S METHOD WITH DEEP PENITENCE.

A L L true converts were made welcome to our bleffed Lord's goodness. Even after long and great finning, he doth not cast them out. What an affecting example of this have we, in the woman who had been a lewd transgressor, 'who brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood 'at his feet,' behind him, 'weeping; washing his feet with 'her tears, and wiping them with the hairs of her head: 'yea, kissing his feet,' at times, and 'anointing them with the ointment (g)!'

She had hearkened to the doctrine of repentance, for the remission of sins, and is saved by that voice of love. She comes to Jesus weary and heavy laden (h); is unable to forgive herself; marks genuine contrition, with gratitude, in the whole of her deportment. 'She loved much; and, in return, she is much beloved. 'Her sins, which had been many, are forgiven her.' Instructive pattern! The signs and means of her former looseness, are all degraded. For, behold what carefulness (i); yea what clearing of her-felf; yea what indignation; yea what fear; yea what vehement desire; yea what zeal; yea what revenge; all in proof, that 'she forrowed after a godly fort.'

Yet what says the pride of pharisaism? 'This man, if e John vii. 17, f Isa xxvi. 7. g Luke vii, 37. h Matth. xi, 28, 47. i 2 Cor, vii. 11.

he were a prophet, would have known how, and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for the is a finner. Lord, thy thoughts are not as our thoughts (c). ' neither are thy ways as our ways. For as the heavens 'are higher than the earth, fo are thy ways higher than our ways, and thy thoughts than our thoughts.' Ours lead to condemn; thine, to invite and fave, faving, ' feek ye the Lord, while he may be found, call ye upon ' him while he is near. Let the wicked forfake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.'

So, in the present case, 'he, the blessed Jesus, said to the woman d), thy faith hath faved thee, go in peace.' Adorable pleader for the penitent! How mild and just, withal, is his reproof to the narrowness of human compassion! Attentively read from verse 40. The bonest griefs which go before ameniment of life, can never be forgotten, in as much as ' Jesus Christ is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever (e).' Genuine tears are more expressive than all words. The heart is every thing. 'Bleffed are they that mourn (f), for they ' shall be comforted. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious feed (g), shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. By the gentleness of Christ, let us all be taught. In his favour is life (h).

SECTION XIII.

CHRIST'S METHOD with OUTWARD SUFFERERS. EARS, from motives of religion and frientship, were not wanting in our divine teacher. ' We have not c Ifa. Iv, 8, 9, 6, 7. d Luke vii 50. e Heb. xiii, 8. f Mat. v. 4. g Pfal. cxxvi 6. h P. d. xxx. 5.

at

a

),

15

er

ζ,

n

,

n

fuch an High Priest (a), which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without fin.' Next to piety his prevailing principle was tenderness to want, or affliction of any kind. ' He loved Martha, and her Sister, and Laza-'rus (b).' Yet he did fuffer Lazarus to die 'for the glory of God, and that the fon of God might he glorified 'thereby.' Being brought to the tomb of his 'friend, Je-'fus wept. Behold how he loved him.'

His patriotic zeal was no less remarkable, in the certain view of what his countrymen were foon to fuffer. 'And when he was come near (c), he beheld the city, and wept over it, faying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But ' now they are hid from thine eyes;' and fo forth. 'O Jerufalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and fronest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is lest unto you desolate (d).

How graceful! How devoutly generous! As a friend and a lover of his nation, he was thus affected. Though just about to relieve, 'when he faw Mary weeping, and the Jews 'also weeping which came with her, he groaned in fpirit and was troubled. Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst fee the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lift up his Eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come ' forth (e), and he that was dead came forth.'

a Heb. iv. 15. b John i. 5, 4, 35, 35. c Luke xix, 41, &c. d Matth. xxiii. 37, e John x 3: 40, 43, 44.

A motive of friendship, then, doth justify tears; and even commend them. That sweet cordial to human life, too delicate for an appointment by law, is admirably sanctioned by the above. To have sympathies in common with our blessed Lord, is a thought of special endearment. I am the resurrection and the life (f), he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and besieveth in me, shall never die. How inestimable a connection! The pure mind of Jesus, is yet tender; but undisturbed. He can and doth exercise substantial pity to his afflicted members.

In all their forrows, he is as one that weeps. His love is strong to work. Both able and willing. A great High Priest verily (g). Let us hold fast our profession. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' What a happiness, to be in such good keeping. 'Neither pray I for thefe, my Apostles alone (b): but for them also which fhall believe on me through their word. Transporting fentiment! Wonder, O Christian, and rejoice. Think how he loves you. I have called you friends (i): for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto vou. That whatsoever ye shall ask of the father in my name, he may give it unto you. Weeping may endure for a night (k): but joy cometh in morning.' If delay be needed; it is for the glory of God, and that the Son of Man may be glorified thereby.

f John xi. 25, 26. g Heb, iv. 14, 16, h John xvii, 20. i chap. xv. 15, 16, k Pfal xxx. 5.

SECTION XII.

CHRIST A FAIR TEACHER.

HEN, from views of immediate ease, or secular interest, certain of our blessed Lord's hearers made offer to follow him; he was very explicit as to the severe treals they would have to encounter. If any man will come after me (a), let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. To one, in particular, who was very consident of his own strength (b; Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head. How unlike to one who had any thing else but truth and goodness in view? Inconstancy of human temper, he is well aware of, and even at the loss of followers, would guard against.

This marks special candour; and is itself a presumption that he came from God. Other teachers ought to copy from him; since 'no man having put his hand to the plough (e), 'and looking back, is sit for the kingdom of God.' A devoted heart to the world, can never be true to Christ. 'The carnal mind is enmity against God (d); for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Seek first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness (e). Labour for the meat which endureth to everlasting life (f). Set your affection on things above (g). Count the cost (h). It is better,' not to take any great matter in hand, than to give up. Shame and offence are inseparable from drawing back!' The just shall live by faith (i); but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in them.'

ed. m-

ven

deby

ffed

ur-

he

be-

ec-

is gh et in

a or ch

w ys

to

e

f

d Rom. viii. 7. e Matth. vi 33. f John vi. 27. g Col. iii. 2. h Luke xiv. 28. i Heb x. 38.

SECTION XIII.

CHRIST COMMISERATES A FEEBLE STATE
OF GOODNESS.

HEN the Apostolical Disciples were in danger from a sudden storm at sea; they awoke their Master saying (a), 'Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, why are ye fearful, O ye of little saith? Then he arose and rebuked the winds, and the sea, and there was a great calm.' He blames, you see, with mild expossulation.

Behold an emblem of our present state; and restect on the love which yet pities, and is ready to succour feeble virtue. Faith, knowledge and goodness, though fincere, may not always be in lively exercise. Our divine Saviour is at hand, to pity such. 'He doth not break the bruised reed (b); 'but brings forth judgement unto truth.' Fearfulness, from sudden awful hazards, he will not suffer to be overcome. 'O my God, my soul is cast down within me (c). 'Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy waterspouts: 'all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.' Therefore, will I remember thee. Yet the Lord will command his soving-kindness.

Here is foundness in the main, which will ever be accepted. 'Be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper (d). Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might (e). Remember the years of the right hand of the Most High (f).' Be much in prayer; delight in God's house; 'for his way is in the sanctuary.' Lively exercise will not be far off. We are troubled on every side (g), yet not distressed:

a Mat. viii. 24, 26. b Ifa. xlii. 3. c Pfal xlii. 6, &c. d Heb, xiii. 5, 6. e Eph vi, 10. f Pfal. lxxvii. 10, 13. g 2 Cor. iv. 8, &c.

we are perplexed, but not in despair: persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed: always bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

To be intimate with Christ is true comfort. 'He is a faithful High Priest (g), in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the fins of the people: for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted; he is able to succour them that are tempted. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace (h), and that your joy may be full. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. And who is he that overcometh the world (i), but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God? This the victory.'

SECTION XIV.

were enterentietethornononononononono

CHRIST A LIGHT OF THE GENTILES.

As the natural fun was rising, say most of our able commentators, Jesus thus spake to the multitude, 'I am the light of the world, he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (k). Whatfoever maketh manifest is light (1).' Hence the evangelical prophet, (m) 'Come ye, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.' And again, 'Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.'

How applicable, above every other, to the benighted state of poor idolatrous heathers? Hence, good old Simeon, holding the babe in his arms, blessed God, saying, 'Mine g Heb, ii, 17, 18. h John xvi. 23, 24. i 1 John v 5. k John vili. 12. I Eph. v. 13. m ii, 5. ix, 1.

H 3

TE

om aynto

he

n. he

ue.

d,

(f, r-).

: d

.

2

,

'eyes have seen thy salvation (m): which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles.' The discoveries by him, were, in time, to become

universal. 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations (n).'

The accounts of Almighty God, first by Christ, and then by his Apostles, are at once clear, condescending, and satisfactory. 'Though there be that are called Gods (o), as there be Gods many, and Lords many; to us; there is but one God, the Father. The only good, the only wise, and just.' The God of all grace and consolation. 'Through his tender mercies (p), the day-spring from on high hath visited us; to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. To the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of their sins.' Here is servile dread of deity most happily removed, 'to serve God in holiness and righteousness be-

'I am not come, faid Jesus (q), 'to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Not to condemn the world (r), but to save the world.' Thus, 'is God in Christ (3), reconciling mankind unto himself, not imputing their respented trespasses unto them.' How clear to such, is the rule of life? How pure and unmixed? He spoke all things well. 'Never any man spake like him (t). To the' illiterate 'poor, the gospel is preached.' The whole illustrated from his own example.

With him, the heart is every thing. 'Take heed that 'ye do not your alms before men, to be feen of them (u), otherwise ye have no reward of your father which is in heaven. The same way, as to prayer and sasting. And

m Luke il 30, &c. n Mat. xxviii. 19. o t Cor. viil. 5, 6. p Luke i 7, 8, ver. 27, q Mat. ix. 13. r John iii. 17, s 2 Cor. v. 19. t John vii. 46, u Mat. vi. 1, 5, 16.

whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath comimitted adultery with her already in his heart. If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them (a). Happy for both worlds. 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life.'

ed

n-

ne

en

IS-

as

is

e,

h

th

d

of

n

y

,

,

How worthy of our attention! How sweet and cheering! 'Death abolished; life and immortality brought to 'light (b). To walk in darkness, must now be inexcusable. 'Ye are a chosen generation (c), a royal priesthood, an 'holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light. Let your light so shine before men (d), that they may behold your good works, 'and glorify your Father which is in heaven. For it had been better for them (e), not to have known the way of 'righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.'

SECTION XV.

CHRIST'S DOCTRINE TRULY GRACIOUS.

THE law was given by Moses (a); but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.' Both were of divine original; though they wisely differed, according to the different states or ages of the human race. A burdensome preparative ritual suited well, to an early unripe period. The heir, being a child, different nothing from a servant (b), though he be destined Lord of all: but is under tutors and governors, till the time appointed by the Father. But when the sulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, rather born of a woman, made un-

a John 13 17, v. 24 b 2 Tim i 11. c. 1 Pet. ii 9. d Matth. v. 16. e 2 Pet. ii. 21. f Jo. i. 17. g Gal. iv. 1, &c.

der the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that

we might receive the adoption of fons. And we beheld his

'glory (c), the glory of the only begotten of the Father,
'full of grace and truth'

His words were fweet and beneficial. He chose a low outward estate, that the bulk of mankind might have the easier access to him. For the same reason, such too were his familiar attendants. He made use of language accommodated to the times; and changed nothing of this sort, nor of their ideas, which did belong to natural things. He often spoke in parables, when the state of his heavers could not admit of a plainer method; which, upon ingenuous inquiry afterwards, he did explain. Being mostly taken from sensible, and present objects, they laid fast hold of the memory. He ordains nothing arbitrary. Grace is poured into his lips (d). And in his maniesty he rides prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness.

He came eating and drinking as any other man (e), though he was well aware, that such manner would be misconstructed. Upon invitation, he did not resuse to sit down to meat with his most captious enemies. And, when there was hope of doing good, he forbore not to invite himself. To-day, said he to 'Zaccheus (f), I must abide at thy house. Now Zaccheus was a publican. And when they saw it they all murmured, saying, that he was gone to be a guest with a man that is a sinner. And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor: and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him sourfold. And Jesus said, this day is salvation come to this house, for so much as he

come to feek and to fave that which was loft.'

c John i. 14, d Pfal. xlv, 2, 4. e Luke vii 34. f Luke xix. 5.

also is the Son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is

In short, his whole character was gentle and social. Let her alone (f): against the day of my burying hath she kept this. For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always. Thus spoke Jesus, when the whole house was filled with the odour of ointment of spike-nard very costly. Woman, said he to another, whom he knew, upon the whole, to be ingenuous, and not far from the kingdom of God, if thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. (g) An austere manner was quite the reverse of his.

How mild does he shew himself to one who had been a gross transgressor? And how piously grateful were her returns (b)? 'Her sins which are many, are forgiven; for 'she loved much. And to another (i), neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. Add to all these (k), 'how the Lord said, I tell thee Peter, the cock shall not 'crow this day, before thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter: and Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

How worthy is this divine Saviour of cordial acceptance, and trust! Such grace answers precisely to the method in which he taught (1), 'Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.' Herein let all superior, imitate him. The sour and distant must ever meet with an unwilling ear. They undo even their best designs.

f John xix. 7, 8, 3. 'g John iv. 10, h Luke vii 47. i John viii, 11. k Luke xxii. 34, 61, 62. l Matth. xi. 28, 29.

Sometimes they are worse than those whom they would criminate.

CONTINUED.

Only vice and prejudice can be infensible to this. 'He that believeth on him is not condemned (a), but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, less his deeds should be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.' Man, as man, is made for holiness. By opposition to this, he becomes justly punishable. And what other system but the gracious one of the gospel, can possibly deliver him.

It was the defign of Jesus to restore from both guilt and corruption. He taught, and still continues to teach by his word, 'repentance and remission of sins (b). No necessary mean is now left wanting. 'God was in Christ (c), reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. He does infinitely more, in this way, than the best of men are capable of towards one another. A covenant of pardon sealed in blood, should be a sufficient answer to all difficult questions, put either by doubting minds, or professors of science salsely so called. One thing, and but one, says the great author of salvation, excludes from hope (d); 'Except ye repent, ye shall inevitably perish.'

a John iii. 18, 19, 29, 21. b Luke xxiv. 47, c 2 Cor. v. 19. d Luke xiii. 5.

That is, 'cease to do evil (a), learn to do well. Come now, and let us reason together, faith the Lord: though your fins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; if they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. And how exceeding great and precious are his promises of aid,' under the gospel? 'A wake thou that sleepest (b), and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you (c), both to will and to do of his good pleasure.' What a relief to weakness, from long habit, have we here? It is like the voice of God from above, 'turn ye at my reproof: behold I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.'

All with a view to endless life, 'For the Lord God is a fun and shield (e); the Lord will give grace and glory. To them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for these. They shall not come into condemnation (f), but are passed from death unto life I am the true way thither (g); No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. I go to prepare a place for you.' Here is the chief of all gracious truth, supported by miracle. Even one 'from the dead. Christ the first fruits (h). Asterward they that 'are Christ's, at his coming.' Rather, at his appearance. 'Absent from the body (i), and to be present with the Lord.'

I am the door (k), by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them,

a Ila. i, 16 17, 18, 19. b Eph. v. 14. c Phil. ii. 12, 13. d Prov. i 23. e Pfal, lxxxiv. 11, f John v. 24, g John xiv. 6. h 1 Cor. xv. 23. i 2 Cor. v 8. k John x. 9. 27, 28.

'and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, 'and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them 'out of my hand.' My father which gave them me, is 'greater than all: and none is able to pluck them out of 'my Father's hand. I and my father are one (g).' How gracious! 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the 'shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with 'me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me (b). And I 'will love him (i), and will manifest myself to him.'

Beyond these advantages, whither can grace itself go?

Blessed is the people (k) that know the joyful sound, they

shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and in thy

righteousness shall they be exalted. For thou art the

glory of their strength. Sin shall not have the domi
nion over you (l), for ye are not under the law, but un
der grace. Now, being made free from sin, and become

fervants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and

the end everlasting life. Nothing less than grace for grace.

(m) Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of

the Lord is risen upon thee (n). Compare Tit. ii. 14, &c.

iii. 8.

SECTION XVI.

ne e-e-e-e e-e-p->->->->-

CHRIST TEACHES WITH WISE CAUTION.

THE best of tempers naturally and even after being improved, may be surprised into rash measures. John said, (a) 'Master, we saw one casting out devils in 'thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not 'with us. And Jesus answered, forbid him not: for he

g J.hn x. 29 30 h Pf. xxiii 4 i John xiv. 21. k Pfal, lxxxix, 15, &c. / Rom, vi, 14, 22, m John i, 16, n Ha, lx, 1, o Luke ix, 49, 50,

ife.

em

, is

of

ow

the

ith

I b

0 ?

ey

e.

y

10

i-

1-

e

d

.

f

.

that is not against us, is for us.' A sentiment of great use. The person complained of might not, as yet, firmly believe; and notwithstanding he is friendly. Such there are, in every age; and they require to be managed with discretion. To oppose them with rigour, would be highly unfit. They may prove useful, upon the whole, if the bond of charity be not broken. A righteous cause cannot well fuffer from them. To remain neutral is far more hazardous. Whence faid Jesus, he that is not with me is against me:

and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.'

Times of trial demand appearances, agreeable to inward conviction. Nor ought these, upon any account, from private respects, to be challenged. It is much more fit to treat them as friends. Some indeed preach Christ, even of envy and strife (b); and some also of good will. The one preach · Christ of contention, not fincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; but the other of love, knowing that I am fet for the defence of the gospel. What then? Notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ 'is preached: and I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.' Heroic excellence! He would not, even where provocation was given, narrow the circle of friends to a good cause. It was enough, that they agreed with him in effentials.

So did his master teach, as above. 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in, or into, the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' A brief, glorious comprehensive baptismal Creed. which, as principles, no more needs ever to be added. Teaching them, however, to observe all things (c), what foever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.' Owing to this, the a Matth, xii. 30 b Phil i, 15. 16, &c c Matth xxviii. 18, 19,

• primitive believers gladly received his word (d), and were baptized. And the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And, being of one heart, they had all things common.

Among so great a multitude, in lesser points how unavoidable would differences be? Yet, 'they all savingly believed (e), and were altogether.' Glorious go pel union
days! Their only contest seems to have been, who should
love most; so as to 'do most good: praising God, and ha'ving savour with all the people.' So still, and ever, 'he
'that is not against me is for me.' Happy they, who think
with candour, moderation, and charity. Forbid not the willing
mind to follow as he best may. Far less be outrageous! It
belongeth not to us now, to discern spirits. 'Who art thou
'that judgest another man's servant (f)? To his own master
'he standeth, or falleth: yea, he shall be holden up: for
'God is able to make him stand.'

The best of friends, make not always the greatest visible professions. 'Hast thou saith?' meaning as to points of doubtful disputation, 'have it to thyself before God. 'Happy is he that condemneth not himself, in that which he alloweth. Let us not therefore judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall in a brother's way. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; for he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Envies thou for my sake? (g) Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them.' How mild,

d Acts ii. 41, 42. chap. iv. 32. echap. ii. 44 47. f Rom. iv. 1, 12.

how unfanatical, is Moses here. Most like him who said, forbid him not: for he that is not against me, is for me.

Such authority doth teach in clear manner to stifle fecret emulations. At no time to mix human wrath with what is religious. To love good, for its own sake. To approve it much when done by others. 'To have fellowship one with another (a).'

SECTION XVII.

CHRIST TEACHETH SELF KNOWLEDGE.

HEN John, the beloved disciple, said in his haste, (b) 'Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them of this village, 'even as Elias did? He turned and rebuked' both disciples present, and said, 'ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And' to avoid all dispute with the inhabitants, they went to another village.' If he so naturally affectionate did err, what have the very best still to fear? The lesson suggested by our blessed Lord's words, is, to beware of wrath. They who did provoke the apostles were to blame; but the apostles themselves yet more.

The doctrine they had often heard from their master was, not to resist evil (c).' To yield some part of their right, rather than to quarrel. As much as possible to 'love enemies, to bless, and do them good.' Great indispensible duties, and not to be regularly exercised, without much self knowledge. The spirit, or temper, must be often, and carefully studied. 'He that is slow to anger (d), is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit, than

a 1 John i. 7. b Luke ix. 54, 55, 56. c Matth v. 39, 40, 41, 44, d Prov. xvi, 32.

• he that taketh a city. He that hath knowledge spareth

his words (e); and a man of understanding is of an excel-

'lent,' or cool spirit, Margin. 'Whereas he that is hasty

of spirit, exalteth folly (f).

Arguments for conviction are ever to be used, where people differ in opinion; and even when they are under the power of strong prejudice. No leave is given to avenge ourselves. ' I will repay, saith the Lord (g). Be not ' overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.' Till fost measures have their effect, patience, long suffering, and gentleness, are to be in constant exercise. With that view, we ought to reflect and be familiar with ourselves. Even good natural capacities, with fome lengths of improvement, are not always to be trufted. When mistakes upon any one side provoke irritation, suspect the want of inestimable felf-know-That is, a great deficience as to true religion. ledge. Prove your ownselves. (b) Know ye not your ownselves, ' how that Jesus Christ is in you,' by pure imitative faith, except ye be reprobates?

An alarming thought! 'Where the spirit of the Lord is (i), there is liberty. And we all, beholding as in a

glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same

· image, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the

Lord. Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ (k),

he is none of his. For hereunto were ye called (1), because

· Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that

• ye should follow his steps. Who, when he was reviled,

reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not;

but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.'

Unless we be much upon our guard, the very importance of right principles and behaviour, will be apt to inflame bue Prov. xvii 27. f chap. xiv. 29. g Rom. xii. 19, 21 h 2 Cor. xiii, 5, 1 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. k Rom. viii. 9. l 1 Pet. ii 21, 23.

man paffin Such feems to have been the cafe with John and James. 'But they knew not' fully as yet, 'what manner of spirit they were of.' Honest zeal, with partial blindness, did missead them. It was bitter, and therefore not to be gloried in. (a) 'Wherefore, my beloved brethren, (b) let every man be swift to hear, flow to fpeak, flow to wrath. For the wrath of man worketh: not the righteousness of God. And the fruit of righteousness is fown in peace of them that make peace (c). Such do all in their power to lessen the appearances of misconduct, in place of magnifying them. With fire at their command, they would not call it down to confame. So, of Christ it is. faid, (d) ' he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice of anger to be heard in the streets.' How gently does he rebuke? ' ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Behold here, the 'restoring spirit of meekness (e) Bear ye one another's burdens, and thus fulfil the law of Christ. Speak the truth in love; (/) He that loveth his brother abideth in the light (g), and there is no occasion of flumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because darkness hath blinded his eyes.

Let the *lymbol* of warm mutual friendship be regularly attended upon. 'For we being many are one bread b), and one-body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Both this and the *cup* are jointly participated. Are they not the 'communion of Christ's body and blood? The fon of man came not to destroy, but to save. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with the leaven of malice, and wickedness (i), but with the unleavened bread of sincerity

a James iii 14, b chap.i, 19, 20. c chap. iii. 18. d lfa, xlil. 2. c Gal vi. 1, 2. f Eph. iv. 15. g 1 John li, 10, 11. h 1 Cor. x: 17, 16. i 1 Cor. v. 8.

'and truth. Duties of common humanity lead to self-knowledge. A good cause, in time, will ever support itself. Leave judgement to unerring wisdom; and remember, (a) 'He 'shall have judgement without mercy, who hath shewed 'no mercy.'

SECTION XVIII.

-4-4-4-4-4-4-4-4-4-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-3-

CHRIST THE GIFT OF GOD.

SAYS our divine saviour, (b) 'God so loved the world, 'that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. 'He gave him, not only to be listed up, as was the serpent in the wilderness;' but prior to this, that he might teach and exemplify religion. The dostrine of his cross was to be peculiarly edifying. Whence says St. Paul, (c) 'we preach 'Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks soolishness; but unto them which are 'called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, 'and the wisdom of God.'

Here, he is to be beheld as a fovereign cure for perishing fouls. 'I am the bread of life (d). And the bread that 'I will give, is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.' In the whole of his doctrine, momentous; but in this more than any. 'For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that' spiritually eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.' All the above originates from the gracious, or pitying love of God. It may seem pious to magnify that of Christ, with design to lessen this; but is by no

3 James ii. 13. b John iii, 16, 14. c I Cor. i, 23, 24 d John vi. 48, 55, 56

means justifiable. 'All things are of God (e), who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.'

In this was manifested the love of God towards us (f), because that God sent his only begotten son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Scarcely for a righteous man (g) will one die: yet peradventure for a good' generous 'man,' as well as just, 'some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Of God are ye in Christ Jesus (b), who of God is made unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sandification, and redemption. Behold the exceeding riches of his power to us-ward (i)!

'By grace are ye faved through faith (k); and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. If, by one man's offence (1), death reigned by one; much more they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteous ness, shall reign in life, by one Jesus Christ.' Men, as men, do not more certainly die, under a primary sentence of condemnation; than, as 'renewed, or born of the spirit from above, (m) 'they become incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth, and abideth for ever. And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you. Of his own will begat he us (n), with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures.' Neither principle, nor operation from it, can perish, 'but must endure for ever (o).'

We know (p), that if our earthly house of this tabernacle

e 2 Cor. v, 18. f 1 John iv. 9, to. g Rom v, 7, 8 h 1 Cor. i. 30. iEph. i. 19 k chap. ii 8. l Rom. v, 17. m 1 Pet. i, 23. n Jam. i, 18. 0 1 Pet. i 25. p 2 Cor. v. 1,

were dissolved, we have a building of God, eternal in the heavens. Therefore, we are always consident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (k): we are consident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Now he that wrought for us the self same thing, is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the spirit. Our proper business is, to hear and obey, that our souls may live (1). Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader, and a commander to the people. The word is nigh thee (m), even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt consess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart.

his unspeakable gift (n).

man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Thanks be to God for

SECTION XIX.

CHRIST SUPERIOR TO JOHN.

A Man, said the 'devout modest Baptist (a), can re'ceive nothing except it be given him from heaven.
'Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the
'Christ, but that I am sent before him. He must encrease,
'but I must decrease.' Here all due respect is paid to supereminence of character, in the same teaching, or prophetical
office. He is pleased to enlarge, or amplify upon this. A
noble lesson to all future ages.

It may be remarked that John Baptist's disciples would k 2 Cor v. 6, 8, 5. 1 Ifa. lv. 3, 4. m Rom. x. 8, 9, 10. n 1 Cor. ix 15, 0 John iii. 17, 28, 30.

have had him, from felfish views, to have been less faithful.

And they came and said, Rabbi, or Master (a) he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come unto him. But his zeal was of quite a different nature. It was to be impartial, steadfast to truth. Whence the suitable answer, given as above. So, in every age, a person's own trust ought primarily to be discharged, with all possible advantage, likewise, to those of others.

When zeal takes a different turn, it unavoidably leads to discord, contention, and almost every evil work (b). Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom. Wherever there is the least bitterness, there is usually the most of truth. All ought to suffer pect an over heated temper, even in religion. Yet, unhappily, the multitude do oftener judge from sound, than sense; from appearances, than from just reasoning.

To give due praise, like the great example under contemplation; is an high attainment, and of great service to mankind. From the Baptist's testimony, we are led to conceive of Jesus, as only infallible Lord, or head of his church. An endearing motive to union, among all true believers, who thus love as he loves. 'There are differences of administration (c), but the same Lord. Diversities of gists, but the same spirit; diversities of operations, but the same God that worketh all in all. Now the manifestation of the spirit in each, is given to every man to prosit withal. The best gists may and ought to be earnestly coveted; and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. Even that of love,' afterwards

a John iii, 26. b Jam, iii. 16. chap, iii. 13. c I Cor. xii. 5, 4, 7, 31.

beautifully displayed, and strongly urged. 'Charity ne'ver faileth (c).' Happy they, who are zealously affected always in that which is good (d).'

SECTION XX.

CHRIST THE CHOSEN AND BELOVED OF GOD.

BEHOLD my servant, whom I uphold (e), mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgement unto the Gentiles.' It is no disparagement of Christ, but the direct contrary, when he is thus spoken of. He appeared in our nature, with a 'true body and a reasonable soul. In all things made like unto his brethren (f), yet without sin. Made of the seed of David, according to the slesh (g); and desclared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Hence, Jesus increased in wissom, and stature with age, and in savour with God and man. So also Christ glorished not himself (b), to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, thou art my Son, to-day I have begotten thee.'

Upheld, too, by the same Sovereign Lord, he did what was proper to make all things new; saying, in effect (i), 'Lo, I 'come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I de-'light to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within 'my heart. Hence, that other beautiful prediction, Isa xi. which should be read and compared.'

e chap, xiii 8 d Gal iv 10. e lfa xlii 1. f Heb. ii. 17. chap. iv. 1. g Rom. i. 3, 4. h Heb. v 5. i Mal. xl, 7, 8. k lfa xi. 1.

SECTION XXI.

CHRIST'S PROPERTIES AS A SON. THE words of Isaiah (a) are remarkably strong and comprehensive. 'For unto us a child is born.' A child by way of eminence, even as to birth. 'That feed of the woman, who was to bruife the head of the ferpent (8): to destroy the works of the Devil, sin and death (c); In whom all the prophecies were to be fulfilled, ' from Samuel and those that follow after (d); The infant of days, who fhould encrease in wisdom and stature (e), and in favour with God and man.' The instrument of a new being, as it were to our earth: 'for we are his workmanship (f), created in Christ Jesus unto good works : which God hath

before ordained that we should walk in them.

The Son is given, fo as to accomplish another grand prediction (g). Behold a Virgin shall conceive, and shall call his Name Immanuel: which, being interpreted (b), is God with us.' And all this, as appears from the context of Isaiah 7th, to go before the entire overthrow of the Fewish k ngdom. ' Fear not, faid the angel of the Lord to Mary (i), thou hast found favour with God. And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his Name Jefus. He shall be great, and fo forth. The brightnessofthe Father's glory; the destined heir of all things. (k) 'Agreeable to Daniel's words; I faw in the visions of the night, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with

'given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all a Isa ix. 6. b Gen iii. 15. c I John iii. 8. d Acts iii. 24 e I u ii 51. f Eph ii 10. g Isa. vii. 14. h Matth. i. 23. i Luke i. 30, &c.

the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was

k Heb i, 2, 3. chap. vii. 13, 14.

'people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his do'minion is an everlassing dominion, which shall not pass
'away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed,
What a luminous prediction! Observe here, and praise the
everlassing 'love of God, even the Father,' compare John
iii. 16. 'Glory to God in the highest (a), and on earth
'peace, good will towards men.'

'The Government shall be upon his shoulder.' Alluding to the custom of stewards and deputies (b). And it ' shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim, the fon of Hilkiah; and I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hands, and he shall be a ' Father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah: and the key of the house of David will I lay ' upon his shoulder. So he shall open, and none shall shut; 'he shall shut and none shall open.' All, in their largest and ultimate fense fulfilled in ' the fon born and given. These things saith he that is holy (c), he that is true, he ' that hath the key of David.' It is as 'thou fayest. I am 'a king.' Yet, not of this world. (d) ' Every one that ' is of the truth heareth my voice.' How good, how gracious a confession made in the presence of Pontius Pilate.

'And his name shall be called wonderful (e),' or really be so, as to his birth, nature, and offices. Though of humble outward condition, he is announced from heaven, great; 'the son of the highest,' one who should posses 'the throne of David; and reign over the house of Jacob sor 'ever. Good tidings of great joy, and to all people. A 'Saviour, Christ the Lord—God with us (b).' How wonderful an union. 'The image of the invisible father (i),

a Luke ii 15. b If xxii, 2, &c. c Rev. iii, 7, d John xvii, 36 37, e If, ix, 6, f Luke i, 32, g chap, ii, 10, 11, h Matth. i, 21, i Col, i, 15.

the first-born of every creature. God was manifest in the flesh (a), justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

He is our divine counsellor. 'Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me (b)? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works. Believe me for the very works' sake. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel (c). A salvation, prepared before the sace of all people.' Why, askest thou for his name, so far as it is a secret? Let his plain necessary counsels be acknowledged with gratitude.

Mighty God, for certain, he is in office. As above fet forth, our g'orious Immanuel. 'For, though there be that ' are called gods (d), whether in heaven, or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), to us, there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. With a name given him above every name (e). The Father hath put all things under ' his feet;' himself only excepted (f). ' If he called them ' gods (g), unto whom the word of God came, and the 'fcripture cannot be broken; fay ye of him whom the Father hath fanclified, and fent into the world, thou blaf-' phemest, because I said, I am the son of God? If I do ' not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, 'though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye ' may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in 'him.' The near connection of fuch a one with mankind, is peculiar and superlative. 'The mighty power of God,

a 1 Tim iii. 16, b John xiv. 10, 11. c Luke ii 32, 31. d 1 Cor viii, 5, &c. e Phil ii 9. f 1 Cor. xv. 27. g John x. 35. &c.

which wrought in Christ (a), raised him from the dead,

and fet him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

far above every name that is named; and hath put all

things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over

'all things, to his body the church. For it pleased the

Father, that in him all fulness should dwell (b). The

fulness of the godhead bodily. Unto the fon he faith (c),

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of

righteoufness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: therefore God,

even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness

above thy fellows.'

'He is the everlasting Father;' or, that of the everlasting age. 'Unto which of the angels said he, at any time (d),

thou art my fon, this day have I begotten thee? Being

* made so much better than they, as he hath by inheritance

obtained a more excellent namethan they. For the fuffering

of death, he was crowned with glory and honour. And he

* must reign (e), till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

Let every tongue confess (f), that Jesus Christ is Lord, to

the glory of God the Father. Jefus spake unto his disciples,

faying, (g) All power is given unto me in heaven, and in

earth.

Prince of peace he is, to whom each of the above properties belong. And all things are of God (b), who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, viz. that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their repented of trespasses unto them. Being justified by faith (i), we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access

a Eph i. 19, 20, 21. b Col i 19. c Heb i. 8, 9. d Heb. i. 5, 4. chap. ii. 9 e I Cor. xv 25. if Phil. ii. 11. g Matth xxviii 18. h 2 Cor. v. 18. i Rom. v, 1. 2.

1

's by faith into this grace, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.' His counfels and his motives also, lead all to blessed union with one another. 'And the peace of God which passeth all understanding (a), shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. The kingdom of God (b), is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God and approved of men. In his days shall the righteous slourish (c), and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.' How adorable, the riches of divine grace! 'For this cause (d), ought we ever to bow the knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SECTION XXII.

CHRIST THE GLORY OF ISRAEL.

Of the Jewish nation, 'as concerning the flesh, Christ came (e). He was to be their chief, 'To reign over the house of Jacob for ever (f).' To be, as in the stead of God himself, to them, and to all mankind. (g) 'For he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness (b), hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus 'Christ.'

Before faith came, the Jews were kept under the law of carnal beggarly ordinances (i); shut up to the faith which should afterwards be revealed. The law served as their schoolmaster, to bring them to Christ. That is, to be redeemed from elementary bondage, to the sadoption of sons. At the same time, he came not to destroy the law

a Phil. iv. 7. b Rom xiv. 17, 18. c Pfal. Ixxii 7. d Fph. iii. 14. e Rom ix.5. f Luke i. 33. g Mat, i. 21. h 2 Cor, iv. 6. i Gal. iii. 23-24. chap iv. 5.

'and the prophets (k), in matters of 'pure spiritual wor-

fhip, and duty, but to fulfil. For I fay unto you, that ex-

· cept your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the

· Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the king-

dom of heaven.' See this exemplified at large from verse 21.

Though like to Moses, as lawgiver, (a) Christ was to be his superior. ' Even that which was made glorious at Mount Sinai; (b) had no glory in this respect by reason of the glory that excelleth. Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all beholding as in a glass, and with open face, the glory of the Lord, are changed ' into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the fpirit of the Lord. If the first Jewish covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the ' fecond (c). In that he faith, a new covenant, he hath

" made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxseth old, is ready to vanish away."

What the law could not do, in that it was weak

through the flesh, (d) God, sending his own son in the

· likeness of finful flesh,' hath completely done. ' For the

· law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made us free

from the law of fin, and death. This is the new and

better covenant, faith the Lord, (e) I will put my laws

into their minds, and write them in their hearts: and I

will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins

and their iniquities I will remember no more'

Let not your heart be troubled (f), ye believe in God,

believe also in me. In my father's house are many man-

fions; if it were not fo I would have told you: I

• go before to prepare a place for you. And, if I go

k Mat. v. 17. . a Deut. xviii 8. b 2 Cor iii. 10, 17, 18. c Heb. viii. 7, d R.m. viii, 3. a. e Heb viii, 10 12. f John xiv. 1, &c.

ceive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be alfo. They shall never perish (a), neither shall any pluck
them out of my hand. How glorious, as lawgiver, saviour, and judge. Of his fulness have all we received (b),
and grace for grace; free, rich, accumulated. As the
father hath life in himself (c); so hath he given to the
fon to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgement, because he is the son of

SECTION XXIII.

1

.

1

S

CHRIST APPROVES HIMSELF TO ALL THE CHIL-DREN OF WISDOM.

they have, to the praise of divine goodness, a love to what is true. They inquire, and are fond of credible evidence. It is, for the most part, artistice that misleads their weak minds; so as 'like children to be tossed to and fro, and carried be about with every wind of doctrine (d).' They doubt their own judgement, through 'cunning crastiness of them that 'lie in wait to deceive:' and, at length swallow what is dangerously salse with implicit considence. 'Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth (e). He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season. 'to rejoice in his light. And all bare him witness (f), and 'wondered at the gracious words, which proceeded out of this mouth.'

Yet, how foon and eafily were they practifed upon, almost in the same hour, 'they thrust him out of the city Na-

a John x. 28. b chap. i 16. c chap. v. 26, 27. d Eph. iv. 141-e. John ii. 33. f Luke iv. 22.

'zareth, and led him to the brow of the hill, that they imight cast him down headlong.' After a loud Hosanna, faying, 'blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord to save us (g)' By a misrepresented idea of that salvation; they cry out to a man, 'crucify him, 'crucify him (b).' Ah, and wo is us, for rash, sickle, and popular reliances.

Still real attentive ' wisdom is justified of all her Children (i). Zaccheus, a publican, fays, behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man, by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. On the other hand (k), the Pharifees who were covetous, derided him. Whence, he faid unto them; ye * are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the fight of God.' Mere forms and prejudices did render them averse to pure selfdenying truth. At one time they overvalue peculiar notions; and, at another time, treat them with contempt. Now, the light of nature is every thing; and anon, it is not worth a rush. So, in a thousand things else. The 'absternious Baptist had a devil (1). A more liberal living Son of Man, was a wine bibber, a friend of Publicans and finners. How peevish! How inconsistent!

Yet both difeases continue. Some say, shew us a miracle. A second, that there can be no such thing. A third cavil at prophecies, because they are obscure; a sourth affect to tell us, they are by far too clear and written after the events. Only the Children of wisdom, who love, and are at pains to find her, can be successful. 'Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not (m), beware of malice. 'Beware of

g Matth, xxi 9 h Mark xv. 14, i Luke vii. 35. chap, xix 8, k chap xvi, 14, 16. Luke vii. 33, 34, m Prov. viii. 33.

false Prophets (n), which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them.' If, for example, they nominally profess to revere the word of God; and yet will not submit to what is plainnest and oftenest to be met with there. If they give visible proofs, they are either 'unstable or unslearned; by wresting hard passages of scripture to their 'own destruction (o).' Above all, when it comes to be seen, that with them, the gain of filthy lucre is a chief end of their godliness.

It is a pleasant conciliating thought, that the same ends of holiness and happiness, may be made good, by different methods. John Baptist and our biessed Lord were, as to manner, not only different, but, in some things nearly opposite: yet both of high importance to mankind. The one was rather austere; the other gentle and assable. Both were justissed by the ingenuous. So, what, through human weakness, was a bond of contention at Corinth, saying (p), I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ: was understood, asterwards, to be for the general good. All things are yours (q): whether Paul, or Apollos or Cephas. None of them could properly be wanted. They were Ministers by whom the Church believed, even as the Lord gave to every one. All sit labourers together with God.

Happy teachers and people, who seriously recollect this, so as to profit. 'They will walk together worthy of the 'Christian vocation (r); with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, sorbearing one another in love. Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of 'peace.' Such will never treat any thing as erroneous, or eriminal, which doth not accord to their own private sange.

n Mat, vii. 15, &c. 0 2 Pet. iii. 16. p Eph. i. 12. q chap. iil. 21, 22, 5, 9. r Eph. iv. 1, &c.

They will rather admire in these, the varieties of providence. As in nature, so in grace, they will believe them to be all proper. 'Thus, speaking the truth in love (s), grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ. As every man hath received the gift (t) even so minister the fame one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God: that God in all things may be glorisied, through Jesus Christ.'

SECTION XXIV.

CHRIST IMMANUEL.

manner. So, Acts vii. 9. 'And the patriarchs, moved with envy, fold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him.' In like manner, 'did God send Moses to be a ruler and deliverer, by the hands of the Angel which appeared to him in the bush.' By the same divine presence, or inspiration, all the subsequent Prophets taught; and the heroes of faith wrought wonders. Above the whole, and abstracting from every thing mysterious, 'no man knoweth the Son but the Father (b); That word which was in the beginning with God (c).' His beloved, his only begotten, the brightness of his glory (d), and the express image of his person. In whom dwell all the sulness of the Godhead: bodily (e);' and not as in the temp'e of Judea.

When Jesus began to work miracles, he manifested forth

* his glory (f); and his disciples more than ever believed.

on him. The word made flesh,' or true and proper man,

dwelt among us (g), and we beheld his glory, the glory

s Eph. iv. 15. t I Pet. iv. 10, 11 a Matth. i. 21. b Matth xi 27. c John i. 1. d Heb. i. 3. e Col, ii. 9. f John ii. 11. g John i. 14.

as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace, and truth. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth (b), with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good,

and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil: for God

was with him.'

'Have I been so long time with you 'i), and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou then, shew us the Father! The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness (k), hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the sace of Jesus Christ. An evidence of divine perfection, far superior to that from the Heavens, Firmament, Sun, Moon, Stars, or Temple itself.

And they, the Apostles (1), went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with figns following. As God in Christ, did he fave his people also from their fins. Unto him that loved ns, and washed us from our fins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father (m), to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. How visibly, in all this, ' was Christ God with us? Son, be of good cheer (n), thy fins be forgiven thee. Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine own house. Lord, if thou wilt (0), thou can't make me clean. And Jefus put forth his hand, and touched him, faying, I will, be thou clean: and immediately his leprofy was cleanfed. Speak the word, only, and my fervant shall be healed. And Jesus faid unto the Centurion, go thy way, and as thou hast i John xiv 9, ro. k 2 Cor iv. r. | Mark xvi 20. m Rev. i. 5, 6. Natth. ix. 2, 6. o chap. viii. 2, 3. 8. n Matth. ix. 2, 6.

believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self same hour.

'Thus, the spirit of the Lord God was upon him (q), because, as said by himself, the Lord hath anointed me.

God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him (r). The

Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his

'hand.' How competent a judge, therefore, as well as Lawgiver, Teacher. and Redeemer, must our Immanuel be?

As the Father hath life in himself (,, fo hath he given to

the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him au-

thority to execute judgement, because he is the Son

of Man.' Amazingly comfortable to the upright, and fearful to the unbelieving. 'Kiss the Son, lest he be angry (t)

and ye perish from the way; when his wrath is kindled

but a little; bleffed are all they that put their trust in

'him.' Taking all together, what human mind could have conceived such an excellence of character as God with us?

Yet have a few illiterate Apostles carried the same consistent-

ly through. An appointment equally wise and gracious. Let us mark the steps of our great good Immanuel, and follow him; that we also may be 'partakers of the divine na-

ture (u):

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask, or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

q Ifa. lxi. t. r John iii, 34, 35, s John v, 26, 27, t Pfal, ii, 12, u 2 Pet. i, 4,

SECTION XXV.

CHRIST'S APOSTLES WISELY CHOSEN FROM LOW OUTWARD ESTATE

A FTER the 'miraculous draught of fishes, Jesus said 'unto Simon Peter, with James and John, the sons of Zebedee,' all partners, 'fear not (a); from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and sollowed him.'
Such familiar witnesses, and to be employed as himself was, give high credibility to our divine saith. They were not strangers to sessue, when called; as appears from John i. 37, &c. 'Having sound him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write:' they lest their all, at his command. Their honest industry, with srugal modest behaviour, were chief qualities; with love for heavenly truth. Most sit, to pull men-from depths of error and vice.

In the end, great was their use. It was seen, when ancient Jewish Prophets did not succeed, 'that the soolish 'things of the world (b) did confound the wise; the weak 'things of the world, through divine election, confound the 'things which are mighty; the things despised, and that 'were not' of any account, 'did bring to nought the things 'that were. That no slesh should glory in his presence.' None of all the human race. Here was contempt rather, thrown upon pride and pomp. How amazingly successful were they made, by spiritual gifts! Men of low rank, with nothing to support them, but rather opposed by all, did 'teach the gospel to every nation (c)' with effect. The Lord working, by their means; 'and confirming the word 'by signs following (d).'

a Luke v, 10, 11, b 1 Cor, i, 27, &c, c Mat, xxviii, 19, d Mark xvi, 20,

'He came, and preached peace to you which were afar off, and them which were nigh. Through him we both have an access by one spirit unto the Father. And are built upon the soundation of the apostles and prophets; I Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone (c). In whom all the building, sitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. Other soundation can no man lay (d) than that is laid.' What an honour to be admitted into partnership with Christ! To succeed as he did; and even to a larger extent! 'Ye have not chosen me (e), but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit; and that your fruit should remain.'

CONTINUED.

THE apostolical writings harmonize, in every thing material. Their doctrines are all according to godliness, or tend to the illustration and enforcement of a holy life. Against these trissing apparent differences of time, phrase, or place, ought never to be named. Indeed they indicate to a certainty, that there was no previous concert. Upon no occasion do they either speak, or write, as pleasing men. Nor do they any where magnify themselves. Like their Master, they predict the Jewish overthrow without reserve; because of their public universal corruption. How opposite to any thing like secular design?

It may be observed further, that they dissemble not their own mean outward rank; nor that of their Lord. They even treat with honest freedom one another's faults, not as enemies indeed, but as people of touth. Their method of teaching was plain and simple. 'Not with enticing words of men's wisdom, (f) but in demonstration of the spirit, and c Eph, ii, 17, &c. d 1 Cor, iii, 11, e John xv, 16, 1 Cor, ii, 4, 5,

with power.' That the faith of those connected with them 'might not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the 'power of God.' They decline whatever doth oppose this native garb of truth.

Before men of all ranks, they are just the same; a circumstance which did require not only zeal and courage, but much self-command. All, as has been justly observed, very different from composing in private, free from noise and danger. They engaged at all seasons, with all sorts of characters and tempers, and were obliged to meekness, under sore provocations, Having no such talents naturally, they must have been acquired, or insused. The work was above all human power. Indeed it was a glorious one.

In less than two centuries there was scarce a single nation or kingdom, which did not in whole, or in part, acknowledge the truth of Christ. So says an eminent ecclesiastical writer. (a) Inquiring after the cause of this we are compelled to own, that their success surpassed all buman ability, and must be imputed to the eo-operation of him who said unto them, (b) 'Go ye therefore and teach all nations, 'baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy' Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway 'even unto the end of the world.'

The apostles, then, have left us a sure complete rule of faith and practice. The world has been, and will be yet more enlightened from thence 'It was needful for me to write unto you, (c) and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints of the household of God. (d) And are built upon the soundation of the apostles and prophets,

a A. D. 314, b Mat. xxviii. 19. c Jude iii, d Eph. ii. 19, &c. -

'Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.' To the author of our sacred books, and to him only we are amenable for all our sentiments. 'He that rejecteth me, '(a) and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth 'him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge 'him at the last day.'

CHRIST TEACHES BY HIS EXAMPLE.

SECTION I.

HE IS THE SON OF MAN.

'I Saw in the visions of the night, and beheld one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven (b), 'and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him 'near before him. And there was given him dominion, 'and glory and a kingdom.' Hence it appears, that the high royal investiture of Jesus, was to be the effect of his bumiliation. 'In all things, (c) it behoved him to be made 'like unto his brethren. He was a partaker of flesh and 'blood: hereby the word is made very nigh (d) that we 'may do it. To the poor the gospel is preached (e),' as by the dostrine, so by the examp e of one like themselves. 'For both he that fanctifieth, (f) and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause, he is not ashamed 'to call them brethren.'

a John xii, 48, b Dan vii 13, 14 c Heb ii. 17, 11 d Deut. xxx. 14. e Luke vii. 22, f Heb. ii 11.

Herewith, under a 'divine spirit given to him beyond measure, (a) he spake the words of God. And shewed us an example, (b) that we might follow his steps. Thus anointed, (c) with the Holy Ghost and with power, he went about doing good, and healing all that were opported of the devil.' Let Christ be precious to us, even while he acts as son of man. His pattern is no less than the history of our religion. 'If ye know these things (d) happy are ye if ye do them. But if any man have not the spirit of Christ, (e) he is none of his.'

*Truly our fellowship is with the Father, (f) and with his Son Jesus Christ.' That is, we are joint partakers.

Partakers (g) of the divine nature. Begotten and born of God. (h) The fruit of the spirit, (i) is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. Be ye followers, (k) imitators rather, of God as dear children. That which is born of the slesh, (l) is slesh; and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit.' Such are God's workmanship, (m) created in. Christ Jesus to good works; which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.'

SECTION II.

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF EARLY PIETY.

AND the child Jesus grew (n), and waxed strong in spirit, silled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him. Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year, at the feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after

a John iii. 34. b 1 Pet, ii 21. c Acts x. 38. d John xiii 17. e Rom viii 9. f 1 John i, 3. g 2 Pet i 4 h 1 John v. 1. i Eph. v. 9. k Eph, v, 1, 1 John iii, 6, m Eph, ii, 10. n Luke ii, 40, 41 42.

the custom of the feast.' Neither the mother nor the chi'd were obliged by law; but affection led them thither:

From want of money, it is probable, Joseph and Mary did foon return with, or a little after forme of their pious kinsfok, among whom the chi'd was supposed to be. Whereas, he chose to stay behind His devout love was ftrong. The parents came back to 'Jerufalem, and found him in the temple, fitting in the midft of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were aftonished at his understanding, and answers.' Bieffed family! who, agreeable to the divine law, were fo desirous to transmit the ' praises and strength, and wonderful works of God, (a) from generation to generation: that they might fet their hope in God, and onot forget him, but keep his commandments.

Thus devout parents live in their off pring; and continue to do much good, even after death. Greatly defiring to

fee thee, (b) that I may be filled with joy: when I call

to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which

dwelt first in thy grand-mother Lois, and in thy mother

Eunice; and I am perfuaded that in thee also. Jefus, though young, honours the propriety and usefulness of fuch religious virtue. He not only knew, but felt likewife, that there is a time of life, when the we'l tutored mind becomes sensible of religious impressions. If parents, as they ought, encourage these; their descendants are almost certain to profit by them. These are they who do oftenest urge to be taken into covenant with God Whence, as Jews became fuch 'in heart and spirit (c); fo do 'Christians answer to their baptism,' a good personal conscience (d). They be-· lieve with the heart, (e) and confess Christ with the

a Pfal. lxxviii 5. &c. b 2 Tim. i. 4.5. c Rom. ii. 29. d 1 Pet. iii. 21. e Rom, x 9, 10.

mouth to their salvation.' A delightful presage of future

happiness!

Jesus did not need information as other children do; but he would be an early beneficial example of zeal for public religious ordinances to the end of time. Likewise of modest, unassuming desire to be informed. Likewise of familiar catechetical intercourse. He understood the force of that divine proverb, (a) 'Train up,' or rather, as in the margin, 'catechise a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.' Filial regards are peculiarly momentous. And therefore, (b) 'Jesus went down with Joseph and Mary, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them.' They were both mild, as appears from the context; 'and he who increased in wisdom and stature,' or age, must have increased in peculiar savour with them. He did so 'with God and man.' The good effects of early rational piety are not to be numbered.

SECTION III.

nenese daded 445-305-305-30

GHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF GRADUAL MANI-FESTED WISDOM.

IKE Samuel (c) Our bleffed Lord grew on.' Became conspicuous, and was much attended to. The
increase of his wisdom, as man' was not withheld from
view when proper opportunities did require it. He would
speak of heaven'y things after a modelt manner. Hereby
justice is done to divine gifts. Mutual advantages are received. Then they that feared the Lord, (d) spake often
one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and
a book of remembrance was written before him, for them

a.chap. xxii, 6. b Luke ii. 51, 52 c 1 Sam. ii. 26. d Mal. i. 16, .

- that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.
- · And they shall be mine, faith the Lord of Hosts, in that
- day when I make up my jewels: and I will spare them,
- · as a man spareth his own son that serveth him (a).

We do not read, that ever Christ studied from home, at learned schools The presumption, if not certainty is, that he never did. His willing mind, however, was early open to pious useful subjects. He loved to be 'about his Father's 'business (b).' He must have loved, at all times, to hear things of this fort taught, and to ask, where visible superiors were, in relation to them. The savour of man, by this means, would be added to that of God. What is lovely, ever must deserve praise; and all other circumstances being equal, they do not soon separate (c). The heart of candour warms towards such.

Let the joung act upon this principle. It is at once devout, and humanizing, mild, and quick to oblige! The very worst must esteem and venerate: the mouth of foolish ignorance is stopped, or put to silence. (d) 'A wife man will hear, and will increase wisdom; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wife counsels (e). Both foul and body in such, must increase together. The path of the just (1), is as the shining light, that shineth ' more and more unto the perfect day.' In proportion to the danger of early years, ought to be that of their regard to good preservative means. 'I love them that love me, (p) 'and those that feek me early shall find me. Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word (b). He that walketh with the wife, shall be wife; (i) but a companion of fools · shall be destroyed.'

e Prov. i. 5. f Prov. iv. 18. g Prov. viii 17. h Pfal, cxix. 9. i Prov. xih. 20.

SECTION IV.

CHRIST IS TEMPTED.

WE have not such an High Priest (a), as cannot be touched with the seeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.' His trials in the wilderness, seem, in particular, to have been wisely intended for the good of all who believe in him. Whence, 'being sull of the Holy Ghost, when he returned from Baptism in Jordan (b), he was led thither by the spirit.' St Mark (c) useth a stronger phrase still, driveth, and that immediately.

All of them may be understood to have passed in vision; as promised, Num. xii. 6. 'If there be a Prophet among 'you, I, the Lord, will make myself known unto him, in a 'vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.' Though the former of these were addressed by means of bodily organs, and when the Prophet was quite awake; yet his mind was clear, and he was therefore as much answerable for the consequences, as if the whole had been literally transacted.

Thus, in the case of Abraham (d). 'And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, beschold a smoking surnace and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.' After which, and agreeable thereto, the covenant was made (e). The same way, 'an Angel of the Lord appeared unto Moses (f), in a stame of sire, in the midst of a bush;' who spake to him as God. Not materially different were the divine visions of Isaiab, Daniel, and others. Under the New Testament (g), 'St. Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadsaftly into heaven, and

a Heb iv 15. b Luke iv. 1, c Mark i. 12. d Gen. xv. 17. e chap, xvii. 2. f Exod. iii. 2, 4. g Acts vii, 55.

'faw the glory of God, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.' St. Peter's also was very remarkable (b); when instructed by a vision, to preach the gospel to Cornelius. And another to 'St Paul, to go over to Macedonia, and help the brethren there' In each of the above, bodily sense, and intellectual power, were left in full exercise. They were all accountable.

Thus some, and with no small probability, understand the different wilderness scenes. It must be owned, this frees our subject from considerable difficulties; as that of a literal devil, acting in the manner set forth with a divine person. The Jew would easily conceive these; by means of the above examples. Simplicity, with equal good instruction, must ever please. The wilderness is fitly chosen, as replete with natural encompassing borrors. Says a late judicious traveller (Mr. Maundrel) 'a miserable, barren, mountainous place, as if here nature had suffered some violent convulsions?

The devil, according to popular ideas of those times, was understood to be the head of apostate Angels; and favourer of every kind of mischief. The tempting address, therefore, to current sent ments is well chosen. Satan's malicious artfully ensuring suggestions, could not excuse compliance, more than what is tempted to by people of our own order, from their looks. 'The rule of caution is (i), keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.' It is not the wicked attack we have to answer for; but when that is yielded to.

Even Christ, when filled with the Holy Spirit,' puts not himself in the way of being tempted; but is led thither, for wife ends, by a celestial impulse. Such can never be oversome, though they may be greatly tried. They wait the call.

of heaven. And, it may be observed, that severe trials are not unfrequent, as in the tase of our blessed Lord, upon the back of peculiar high privileges. Thou standest by faith (k). Be not high minded, but fear:

For lack of this, Peter was fifted nigh to ruin. The most devoutly affected should nor forget, that they are still upon earth. In the 'road of duty, God is faithful (1), who will 'not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape. Thus we may measure proficiency, by success in an evil hour. Let patience have her perfect work (m), that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Solitude is good, as a mean; but not absolutely to be depended upon. Here are some peculiar trials to be met with. Christ did often retire; but only to prepare himself the better for public beneficial work. Even his pure mind was met with evil trying suggestions. How to combat these, he hath nobly taught us.

CONTINUED.

JESUS when he had fasted forty days (n), was afterward an hungered; and, in vision, the tempter came
to him and said, if thou be the Son of God, command that
these stones be made bread. Supply thyself by miraele.
And Jesus answered him (o), saying, it is written, that
man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of
God. After this way he was to serve mankind, and not
to consult his own outward personal ease. Though rich in

k Rom xi, 20. 1 1 Cor, x, 13 m James i. 4, 12 n Matth. iv. 2. o Luke iv. 4.

power, he was, 'for their fakes, to become poor (p), that 'they through his poverty might be rich.' Such then, and even during the days of his flesh, was the word or will of God. This, even as Moses and Elias had done, he would honour.

It will be allowed, that the strength of appetite from bunger, is urgent; and, for trial, the power of omnipotence, as in the by past forty days and nights, might abstract itself. A fenfation from thence, may be better conceived than put into language. Yet the feafible suggestion, he would not yield to This would have argued distrust; and been an early misapplication of miraculous powers. If the address was made under form of an angel of light; its force must have been fo much the more felt. With him, however, the word, will, or appointment of God, overcomes every thing. By this, how great soever the pain was, he was fure to live. His answer, therefore is firm, quick, and commanding. His Almighty Father's arm, he knew was not Thortened, from the days of 'Moses and Elias, that he could not save (q).' He had at hand, likewise, a most apposite scripture passage (r). Thus clothed in heavenly armour, he is fafe. ' And the sword of the spirit (s), which is the word of God.'

What a wife proparation for public usefulness! Here is purity of mind itself brought under fore trial; and gloriously triumphing. This proclaims worth, and assures, at length, an adequate reward. Such enter not into dispute with temptation, but meet it at once with 'what is quick and powerful, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (t).' This ever marks an upright affectionate character.

Yet, alas 'when, for the time some, ought to be qualified 'teachers (u) they have need that one teach them again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and

p 2 Cor. viii. 9. q Ifa. l. 1 r Deut. viii. 3. s Eph. vi. 17. t Heb, iv, 12, u chap v. 12.

'are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat: or senses sully exercised (u), to discern both good and evil.' How detestable must it be to live, or subsist by criminal methods?' A little that a righteous man hath (v) is better than the riches of many wicked. The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways (w); and a good man is satisfied from himself. Take heed, and beware of covetousness (x) for the life of man consistent not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.'

CONTINUED.

hazards; but ever bound to all necessary ways, duties, and actions. Noble spirits are most in danger from the love of same. 'If, saith the tempter unto Christ,' in vision, thou be the Son of God (a), cast thyself down from this high pinnacle of the Temple: for it is written, he shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.' If, as understood by some, this did appear to be a certain solemn occasion, when the vast thronging multitude did enter; the suggestion was hereby peculiarly heightened. Yet Jesus doth not hearken to it, no not for a moment; 'but said unto him, it is written again (b), thou 'shall not tempt the Lord thy God.' Not even to be seen and admired for assemble sound.

How like is this to Zechariah's trial (c), 'And he shewed me to Joshua, the High Priest, standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem,

u Heb v. 14. v Pfal xxxvii 16. w Prov xiv. 14. x Luke xii, 15. a Matth. iv, 6, 7. b Deut vi, 16. c chap. iii. 1, 2.

'rebuke thee.' What was now fuggested to our blessed Lord, was from Psal. xci. 11. Shrewt in clothing, and made to a chief buman soible, like that in Gen. iii. 5. 'For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil:' So ever fince, ambitious schemes from pride, have destroyed millions.

Here then was a trial peculiarly seductive. It was such an one as our divine Saviour, afterwards, had often put into his way. Particularly, John vii. 3, 4. 'His brethren, 'therefore, said unto him, depart hence, and go into Judea, 'that thy disciples also may see the works that thou dost. 'For there is no man that doth any thing in secret, and he 'himselfseeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, 'shew thyself to the world.' This too, was what both rulers and common people would have been fond of. What Satan did suggest, would, for a while, at least, have gratisted them all. But it would have been reversing one principal end of Christ's divine mission, to teach exemplarily what was humble, pure, disinterested. Truth mixed with salsehood is special diabolical artisce.

It required the wisdom of heaven to see through the snare; and a similar fortitude, to triumph over it. Both conspicuous in the Captain of our salvation. Again (d), it is written, thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not make trial of virtue, out of his own road. Thou shalt not put thyself in the way of unrecessary hazards. Even trust in the Almighty must be regulated by prudence. Thus seducers tempt, but they can never force. Senses, affections, and appetites, guarded by watchfulness and prayer, must be safe. To live by such measure, is the true nobility of man.

Citing scripture by sound, or in scraps, will often endanger. Yet, how many classes of this sort are there in the world? How often doth 'Satan transform himself into an angel of light (a)? Be familiar with scripture, in its mutual dependency of parts. Then, no passes will be sound to contradict another. Those which are plain will soon enlighten what is more obscure. 'To the poor the gospel is preached (b).'

CONTINUED.

ARTFUL Tempters, and of long practice, referve their most hazardous attacks to the last. Therefore, 'the 'devil,' in vision, 'faid unto Jesus, from the top of an 'high mountain (c),' whence was exhibited all the king doms of the world, and in a moment of time, 'all this 'power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for it is 'delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it. 'If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.' Employ thy miraculous gists, likewise, to effectuate the same among mankind. The sublime height was meant to affect the imagination; and the contrast, in midst of a hideous wilderness, was striking. In whole, an awful address.

Boundless government, wealth, temples, images, statues, military grandeur proportionable, were great secular objects. Magnificence is specially adapted to what are called by some, superior minds. Yet Jesus answered and said unto him, with an indignant holy zeal, 'get thee behind me, 'Satan; for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy 'God, and him only shalt thou serve.' Thus does he treat the cunning sa selood of hell. 'My kingdom is not from 'hence (d). To this end was I born, and for this cause 2 2 Cor, xi. 14. b Luke vii, 22 c Luke iv. 5, &c. d John xvii, 36,

came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. How just, how proper, compared with this to Pilate, was our blessed Lord's answer to the impious suggestion? He was destined universal sovereign though not of this world; to give light to them that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death (a); and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Whatever determines the heart, is to men as God. cannot, therefore serve God and Mammon (b). If any man love the world (c), the love of the Father is not in him.' The coveting, and the voluptuary, are both idolaters (d). The more specionsly vice is dressed up; the more we ought to dread it. They who have temporal advantages and seduce by these, are peculiarly Satanish. 'Refift the devil, and he will flee from you (e). Neither give * place to him (f),' no, not for a moment. Say unto the seductive address, get thee hence. Wait not to dispute. Store the mind with clear, fharp, fcripture remonstrances. Thus, in all things it behoved Christ to be made like unto his brethren (g), that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make * reconciliation for the fins of the people : for in that he him-· felf hath fuffered, being tempted, he is able to fuccour them that are tempted. And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen (b).

² Luke i 78 b Mat. vi. 24 c t John ii 15 d Eph v 5. Phil iii. 19. e James iv, 7, f Eph. iv. 27. g Heb. ii. 17, 18. h Mat xxviii. 20,

SECTION V.

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF PIETY IN PRINCIPLE.

HEN the disciples prayed our b'essed Lord to eat (a), he saith, 'my meat is to do the will of him that 'sent me, and to finish his work:' drawing those who spake to him, after his usual manner, from things visible, or bodily, to things spiritual. So, in answer to what the apostle Philip said, 'shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us (b); Jesus 'saith, believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the 'Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak 'not of myself; the Father that dwelleth in me, he doth 'the works.'

Thus, he glorified not himself (c).' A pleasant, and greatly animating example. The pious, in like manner, will ever refer the whole of their good to him; and also be determined by his will, as their chief end. They are not dazzled by divine gifts, nor do they cease to employ them after a suitable manner. 'He whom God hath sent (d). fpeaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the spi-' rit by measure unto him.' His devotion at heart was continual. Well might he fay, (e) 'I feek not mine own glory, but the glory of him that fent me.' After a flupendous cure, Jesus, in place of allowing the indebted grateful person to go along with him, sent him away (f). faying, return unto thine house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And, when there came a fear on all (g); they glorified God, faying, that a great prophet is risen among us, and that God hath visited his people.

Meekly pious Jesus! how apt are even men of distinction

a John iv. 34 b chap. xiv. 8. 10. c Eph. v 5. d John iii. 34. e John viii. 50. f Luke viii. 38, 39. g chap vii. 16.

to do otherwise? 'To think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith (a),' is pure spiritual devotion. Whereas, 'if a man think himself to be fomething, when he is nothing (b), he deceiveth himself. His beart is not yet fully with him, 'from whom is every good gift, and every perfect gift (c).' To those who are devout, the sather of lights is all in all. 'As the Father knoweth me (d), even so know I the Father. Father, glorify thy name (e! From a troubled soul, and in the nigh prospect of cruissision, how great is this! 'Therefore doth my Father love me,' with special eminence, 'be-cause I lay down my life,' having his commandment, 'that I might take it again.'

In the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers, and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to fave him from death (f), he was 'heard, in that he feared.' Or, as in the margin, 'that he was devout. Father, if thou be willing (g), remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will but thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, Arengthening him.' Marvellous Jojus! How powerful ought thine example to be? Nothing less than infoiration could devise, and keep up confishently to fuch a character. Of all who in principle resemble Christ, it may be faid, (b) 'ye are the temple of the living God:' even as he himself hath done, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my • people. And I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall • be my fons and daughters, faith the Lord Almighty.'

a Rom, xii 3. b Gal. vi 3. c James i. 17. d John x 15. e chap. xii. 28 chap. x. 17. f Heb v. 7. g Luke xxii 42, 43. h 2 Cor. vi 16, 17, 18.

CONTINUED.

THE principle of devotion is best seen, or felt, in suffering, dying hours. It was Christ's meat not only to do, but to finish the Father's work. (a) Piety at heart, all along, did carry him through. In body and mind both, his last trials were unspeakable; and 'he knew all things that 'should come upon him (b). How he was to 'be made 'sin (c),' or treated as an infamous malesation. 'To be despised and rejected of men (d), a man of sorrows, and 'acquainted with gries.' To be esteemed as one, by his enemies, 'stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.'

Yet, 'when he was reviled (e), he reviled not again; when he fuffered, he threatened not; but committed him-' felf to him that judgeth righteously.' Such had been, and fuch to the last, was his filial resource. 'The hour is come (f) ' that the Son of Man should be glorified.' But, it was an awful affecting hour; and behold he prayeth: what shall I fay? ' Father fave me from this hour: but for this cause came I to this hour. Father, at all events, glorify the name. Then came there a voice from heaven, faying, I have both glorified it; and will glorify it again.' And doth he not appear glorious, in nearly his next last bequeathing words (g)? ' Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto ' you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not ' your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I faid unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I. But that the world, as well as you, may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment,

a John iv. 34. b John xviii. 4. c 2 Cor. v. 27. d lfa. liii 3. 4. e 1 ret. ii. 23. f John xii. 23, 27, 28. g John xiv, 27, 31.

fo I do. Arise, let us go hence. Let me now finish my Father's work.'

Astonishing devout composure! He could drop the tear of private friendship (e); and weep, as a patriot, over lost Jerusalem (f). But, by the effect of pure principled piety, he is 'strong of mind, to receive a band of men, and officers from the chief Priests, and Pharisees (g) with lanthorns, and torches, and weapons.' Nor does he fail hereafter, in one single article; but, 'commending his spirit to the Father (b), and giving up the Ghost. The heathen Centurion glorised God, saying, certainly this was a righteous man; and all the Jewish people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned.'

Throughout the whole, Christ's devotion was earnest, without vehemence.' It shines conspicuous, from under the thick dark cloud of affliction. He delivers not his own soul, till he could say (i), it is finished. If, before that, his words were (k), 'My God, my God, why,' or for how long a time 'hast thou forsaken me?' They are words of prayer, taken from an ancient prophetical oracle (1); and they claim a clear interest in the Father's affection. He was heard and saved out of the bitter agonies of death. Every way, the pious principle is sublime. 'Let us admire the depth of the 'riches both of the wisdom, and knowledge of God (m),' in such an example. Let a similar devout principle be our refource in extreme distress. 'If ye abide in me (n), and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it 'shall be done unto you.' Amen.

e John xi 35. f Lu'se xix. 4t. g John xviii 3. h Luke xxiii. 46, 47 48 i John xix. 30 k Matth. xxvii. 46. l Pf.l, xxii, 15, m Rom. xi 33, n John xv. 7.

CONTINUED.

ANY observable things in Christ's life, more especially towards the close of it, are apt to be overlooked through haste, or indifference. Thus, long before his natural strength upon the cross was exhausted: he could say, that his work was just about to be finished (a). By the spirit of the highest that was in 'him without measure (b),' no doubt this may be accounted for. But he likewise knew that he had done every thing appointed for him as a witness; in sufficient of ancient prophecy; as an 'offering and sa' crifice of a sweet smelling savour unto God (c).' From first to last, he is determined by motive or principle.

He is now made fensible, how much the father was pleased with his righteous service. He could claim relief upon divine promise. He even prays accordingly; and his petition is answered. 'Though he were a Son (d), yet learned he experimental obedience, by the things which he did suffer;' so as to become persect. He sees himself, therefore, as then to 'become the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him;' and anticipates this high honour in his own mind. He understands dismission from torture and reproach, as over. It is finished, said he, in hearing of his much consounded enemies; and bowed his head and gave up the Ghost.' Compare Mark xv. 39. Luke xxiii. 40, 47.

'As Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to make the tabernacle, that he should make all things (e) according to the pattern shewed unto him in the mount; so he who 'was in the beginning with God (f), as to the time and measure of his trials: when, and not before the expiration of which, he 'was to lay down his life, that he might take it up again (g), The commandment given, he

a John xix. 30. b chap. iii. 34. c Eph. v. 2. d Heb. v. 8, 9. e Heb, viii. 5. f John i. 1. g chap. x. 18,

did execute; and therefore fays, it is finished. My Father's high will, as to suffering, is over. My next pious exercise is trust to the ensuing glorious recompence.

'When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin (b), he shall see his spiritual seed: he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. For the suffering of death (i), he was to be crowned with glory and honour. That of bringing many sons,' as sollows, unto endless life. For this pure mediatorial joy set before him, he endured the cross (k) despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.' Till the way was quite prepared for this; he could not say, it is similard. But his will, and that of the Father were ever one; and he was not far off from helping him (1).' A clear and sure earnest of this, Jesus had in himself.

Like grounds of acceptance to human prayers, will not fail, at any time. 'Now we know (m), that God heareth not finners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doth his will, him God heareth.' The condition of such is truly blessed. With sirm trust, and decent humility, they may, and ought to 'commit their spirit to him that judgeth righteously. As Jesus was innocent through life, and useful, so let all his sollowers endeavour to be. Then, if they pray from principle with Christ, they shall be heard with Christ. If they suffer with him (n), 'they shall also reign with him. If they be dead with him, they shall live with him.' Such state of triumph is above all words.

h Ifa. lii, to. i Heb, ii. 9, to. k chap, xii. 2. 1 Pfal, xxii. 19. in John ix, 31. n 2 Tim, ii, 1, 12,

me e dedec coeffees bears bear

SECTION VI.

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF VISIBLE PIETY.

WHEN Jefus had cleanfed the temple, after a miraculous manner (a), 'the Disciples remembered' that it was written, the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.' It affected his soul with holy indignation to see 'his Father's house made an house of merchandise,' yet doth he not destroy the impious. By degrees, he was to introduce a more simple useful form of worthip than that of Mojes (b); 'also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my Covenant: even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.' Behold, now, the prelude to that accomplishment.

Still more explicit (c), 'for from the rifing of the fun to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place, incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lordof Hoss.' No method could be made use of more proper to introduce this, than to clear by miracle, the court for religious proselytes at Jerusalem. If the Jews could not then, yet others, in every age, would come to resect, and apply. The immediate effect, we are told, was, 'that many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.' What could not possibly hurt men, but did serve to awe the brute beasts, 'poured out the changers money, and over-

a John ii 15, 17. b lfa lvi 6,7. e Matth, i. 11.

threw the tables,' because here it was, that poor strangers were greatly wronged. In effect the house of God, for sometime past, was made a house of thieves. Being of priestly profession, and corrupt, they were the worst of all.

How much to be commended, in each of Chrift's followers, is zeal for divine worthip, out of pure motives? Like that of their master, it is calm, deliberate, and without wrath; prudent, and feafonable. Some zealoufly affect, but not well; (d) that they may exclude clear apostolical dostrine; ' where-'as, it is good to be zealoufly affected always in a good thing.' The more certain that duties are, the more they are important. I know the forwardness of your ' mind (e), for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia: and your zeal hath provoked very many. So all Chriftians (f) ought to be zealous of good works. To hold: fast the profession of their faith without wavering (g). To ' consider one another, to provoke unto love,' and to beneficent deeds; from thence. Not forfaking the affembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is; but ex-' horting one another.'

Bitter mutual outrages differ widely from the above. They are earth's, fensual, devilish (b). And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace. Pure zeal may eat up one's fels; but cannot devour others. To these last, it may still be said (i), 'ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. The best of causes will not excuse violence. Who is a wife man, and endowed with know-ledge amongst you, let him shew out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom (k).

A worship of deity, folemn, public, and conducted upon clear rules, is a proper object of warm regard. And he,

e Matth. i. 23, 15. d Gal, iv. 17. e 2 Cor, ix, 2, f Tit, ii, 14. g Heb, x, 13 &c, h James iii, 14, 18, i Luke ix, 55, k Jam, iii, 13

'Jesus, came to Nazareth (1), where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.' Here he exemplified regard to a glorious divine institute; and taught occasionally; so that all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.' Where holiness is the end, zeal cannot exceed. In like manner, mutual love. 'I was glad (m), when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.'

And it shall come to pass in the last days (n), that the · mountain of the Lord's house sha'l be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and fay, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' Still, however the house of God may, and is, alas, too often profaned, by formalists, who fay, and do not; by the fuperstitious, the narrow minded; the four fectarian spirit that covets and worships alternately. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they fit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew ' much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. (e) 'And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely fong of one that hath a pleafant voice, and can play well on an infrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.'

l Lukeiv, 16, 22, m Pfal, exxii, I, &c, n Ifa, ii, 2, 3, o Ez. xxxiii 31,

Whereas true zeal is ever pure and generous. 'When Jesus faw a poor impotent man lie (p), and knew that he had been a long time in that case, he faith unto him, wilt thou be made whole?' Then, after a brief answer, 'he saith, rise, take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was made whole.' The Jews were offended, and did 'persecute Jesus because he had done these things on the Sabbath day.' But Jesus nobly 'answered, my Father worketh hitherto, and I work.' The sum, and persection of obedience, is to follow God (q). Compare Matth. v. 48. I Pet. i. 15. Such a sublime model is brought into easy view, by the words and works of Christ.

Beloved worshipper, 'let us love one another: for love is of God (r); and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.' He that loveth not, let him profess what he will, knoweth not God; for God is love. The history of our bleffed Lord's pious benevolent goodness, is that of our religion 'And we all with open face (s), beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. And where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.' In fact, this is heaven itself upon earth. A fure earnest of our future inheritance; (t) a chief design of the literal Sabhath, anticipating that which is everlasting (u); Jesus had no fuch need of visible religious services, as his follower have; but they were the Father's appointment (v), and he would honour them. What can the ungodly fay to this? ' Behold, ' ye despisers (w), and wonder, and perish.'

p John v, 5, 6, 17, &c, q Eph, v, t r 1 John iv, 7, s 2 Cor, iii, 18, 17, t Eph, i, 14, u Heb, iv, 9, v Gen, ii, 1, &c, w Acts xiii, 41,

SECTION VII.

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF RETIREMENT FOR DEVOTION.

AND in the morning, fays St. Mark (a), rifing up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a folitary place, and there prayed. Highly characterifical of fuperior excellence. He would prefer this intercourse, as appears from the context, to popular admiration; for all the city was gathered together at the door. And, thus strengthened for public work, his 'disciples find him, and said unto him, all men seek thee. And he said unto them, let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for therefore came I forth. Prayer, praise, and meditation did sweetly enable him for difficult service.

Thus, at once, did he fanctify folitude and company. Like the fequestere t hermit too often, he carried not the world in his heart; wishing, if his profession would admit, to live among crowds. His was a pure elevation above things from and temporal. A devout habit, or taste. Hereby he found good every where The fervour of desire kept up, 'he follows hard after God b, is continually with him.' When the day is thus begun, and a temper settled, nothing comes amiss. Vicissitudes are expected, and properly waited for, even though ungrateful to sense. Much more generous public offices. Happy they who, Jesus like, abridge their hours for amusement and sleep. Who are never less alone, than when alone, and never better employed.

Great designs, executions, and suffe ing, require much of this abstraction. When Jesus saw the multitudes (c), he

a chap. i. 35, 33, 37. 'b Pfal lxiii 8, lxxiii, 23. c Matth, ix. 36, &c.

was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then faith he unto his disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are sew. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest. The same thing he repeats (d), upon the choice of his seventy disciples. Being come to the Mount of Olives (e), he said unto his Apostles, pray, that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone cast, and kneeled down and prayed. A pious work, which, in the agonies of foresight, he repeated again and again.

SECTION VIII.

mei'e ienene enemportion birbirtion por

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF BENEFICENCE.

Says St. Paul (f), 'Ye know the grace of our Lord 'Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.' Likewise, 'how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth (g) 'with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil: for God was with him.' Having every thing in his power, he submits to an abyss of personal want, for the sake of usefulness to mankind. This led him to do, and to suffer. In both he is altogether love'y; 'fairer than the Sons of Men; grace is poured into his lips (b).'

He anticipates desire very often; than which, sew beauties even in beneficence can well be superior. Thus, in the case of one who had an infirmity thirty and eight years; Je-

d Luke ix 2, e chap, xxii. 40. f 2 Cor. viii, 9. g Ads x 38.

's fus saith unto him (i) wilt thou be made whole?' He is yet more benevolently affected, with a simple uncomplaining answer; 'and saith unto him, rise take up thy bed and 'walk. Immediately the man was made whole.' So much the more observable that along with this, his past enormous sins had been forgiven him! 'Behold, thou art 'made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.' Troubles of long continuance have a peculiar claim to such compassion.

Bleffed be they who fearch, to find out proper objects for relief. How like they are to Jejus! The fituations of want and pain, do often add confiderably to what people fuffer from them; and still more disappointment from others. As Solomon fays (k), hope deferred maketh the heart fick. · Now therefore perform the doing of it (1; that as there was a readiness of will, so there may be a performance also out of that which you have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.' Thus is there a kind of equality established. 'And if thy brother be waxen opoor (m), and fallen into decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase. Thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond servant. Thou shalt not rule over him with rigour; but fear thy · God !

'Withhold not good from them to whom it is due (n), when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, go, and come again, and to morrow 1 will give; when thou hast it by thee.' So did not Je-

i John v. 6 8 14. k Prov. xiii. 12. la Cor. viii, 11, 13, 14. m Lev. xxv. 35, 36, 39, 43. n Prov, iii. 27, 28.

fus; but, wilt thou be made whole? A word, a visit of this fort, is felt even to transport. Observe the opportunity. Mercy is feafonable in time of affliction; as clouds of rain, in time of drought. ' If the clouds be full of rain (a), they empty themselves upon the earth : instructing the rich, to give a portion to feven, and also to eight; yea, to cast their bread upon the waters, that they may find it after many days.' To fuffer among those who are able to aid, is doubly calamitous. Let not frequent pitiable fights render thee callous; but munificently foft, rather, as the heart of him who faid, wilt thou be made whole? ' Put on, as the elect of • God, holy and beloved b', bowels of mercies, kindness. Be rich in good works (c), ready to distribute, willing to communicate. Bleffed is he that confidereth the poor (d). Even calamities from guilt, did not escape the tender notice of our bleffed Lord. As for us, we fuffer juftly; ' for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but for him, he did nothing amiss. Yet, when he saw the faith of a palsied man, and those who benevolently carried him; he faid (e), " man, thy fins are forgiven thee.' The same in effect, as, rife up, and walk. Bear ye, therefore, one another's burdens (f), and fo fulfil the law of Christ. Christ had no fin (g), neither was guile found in his mouth; yet was himself touched with the feeling of our infirmities (b): he had compassion on the ignorant, and on them that were out of the way. (i). Go, and fin no more,' was his lane guage to real penitence (k). How much more ought we, to restore one, if we are spiritual (1), 'in the spirit of meeke ness? To be kind to one another (m), tender hearted, forsiving one another, even as God, through Christ, or for his · fake, hath forgiven us? Compare again, Col. iii. 13. 2 Eccl, xi. 3, 2, 1. b Col, iii 12. c 1 fim. vi 18. E Juke v. 20. 23. f Gal. vi. 2. g 1 ret, ii. 22. d Pial xli. t. h Heb iv, 15 i chap v. 2, k. John vili. 11. m Eph. iv. 32.

Be ye, therefore, followers of God, as dear children (a): And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a fweet fmelling favour." Encourage the modest poor-· Break not the bruised reed (b).' Both have already sufficient to bear. Be of easy access to them. Give aid unfought. Prevent cries and blushes, as much as possible. This is true communicative charity. The very image of Tefus.

CONTINUED.

HRIST being rich (c), for your fakes became poor.' How deep was his humiliation! Foralmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, (d) he also himself likewise was partaker of the same. · He grew up as a tender plant (e), and as a root out of dry ground. He had no peculiar visible form or comelinefs; and when feen, by the people of Israel, there was no fuch beauty that they could defire him. On the contrary, he was rejected and despised of men, a man of forrows, and acquainted with grief: and they hid, at it were, their faces from him. Yea, they did esteem him, stricken. fmitten of God, and afflicted:' they cast him out, as vile-How low, for enriching mankind, 'did the grace of our ... Lord Jesus. Christ condescend!"

All this while, 'the law of God was in his heart,' as written of him. (e) . I delight, faid he, to do thy will, · O my God He preached righteousness,' with affiduity, in the great congregation:" And, even when most oppose ed, ' he did not refrain his lips." He would, at all events, declare the divine faithfulness and salvation to a lost world

a Eph. v. 1, 2. b 1fa. xlii, 3. c 2 Cor viii, 9 d Heb, ii 14. e 1fa, liii, 2, 3, 4. f Pfal xl 7, 8, 9.

N 3

otherwise. 'His meat was to do the will of the Father,
(d) 'and to finish his work.' A work fraught with inessimable good to mankind! 'That we, through his pover'ty might be made rich.' Rich in faith; rich in holiness;
tich in hope; rich in life everlasting. 'The elect, the belov'ed of God (e), the brightness of the Father's glory, the
'express image of his person (f). Yea, God made mani'fest in the stell (g',' did submit. What an endearing contrast!

No work of beneficence was understood as beneath him. By way of example, ' he took a towel, and girded himfelf, and did wash his disciples' feet (b); Marvellous Jesu! Marvellous grace! Our greatness, like his, is to condescend: (i) 'and whosoever thall exalt himself, shall be abased: and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted. Verily, verily, I fay unto you, the fervant is not greater than his * Lord, neither he that is fent, greater than he that fent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them (k). Even where little is possessed, much may be enjoyed. Grace, or charity, superabounds with delight. The joy of enriching others, was that of our bleffed Lord. (1) It was to bring many fons into glory. He came, and preached * peace to heathens that were afar off; and to Jews that were nigh (m).' Thus was the blood of the croft rewarded; for he is our peace, who hath made both one, and * bath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Unmeasurable riches by Christ (n : in' or among us, the hope of glory. Now all things are yours (0); and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. But,' as yet,

d John iv 34. e lfa. xlii. t. f Heb i, 3. g I Tim. iii. 16. h John xiii 4, &e i Mat, xxiii, 11, 12. k John xiii 16, 17, I Heb. xii, 2. chap, ii, 10, m Eph, ii, 13, 14, n Col, i, 27, o 1 Cor, iii. 22, 23,

(a) 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath preparted for them that love him.'

Without the grace of Christ, none of the above advantages could have been known. His willing poverty makes them out to admirable ease. What a powerful incentive to become like him! In particular, 'to do good and communicate, as we have opportunity to all men; especially unto them who are of the household of faith (b).' No mark of gratitude to him, can well go beyond this. 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my bretheren (c), ye have done it unto me. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus (d), how he said, It is more blessed to give, than to receive.'

SECTION IX.

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF FRIENDSHIP.

HEN 'the disciples of John Baptist were departed,' having received their answer to a message from him (e): Our blessed Lord held a discourse with the Jews, as to that great man's character, and concludes it thus, 'For I say unto you, among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist.' Here was an act of friendship. Though, as devout acquaintances, they were known to one another; yet, till the Holy 'Ghost did descend upon Jesus, and abide' by some distinct bodily emblem, perhaps suminous, 'he knew him not as Christ, 'Messiah, or God's anointed (f).'

After this, their connection by office and love, behoved to

a I Cor, ii, 7, b Gal. vi. 10, c Mat. h, xxv 40, d Acts xx, 35, e Luke vii, 24, 28. f Jonn i, 33,

be more dear. A thought that sanstifies one of the most intimate useful ties of human life. John was now in prison; and it was seasonable, therefore, that his character should be fully supported. Such testimony of frientship, as Solomon observes, (a) 'is made for the day of adversity.' There is a friend, again, 'that sticketh closer than a brother.' In the face of hazard, Jesus declines not this duty of affection; but first he suffers the disciples to go. Then proceeds to honour with praise, a fellow-prophet; an intimate. Such a witness for John Baptist was not more true, than valuable. He justifies his friend, in absence, and under reproach from illicit power. How proper! as foretold of him, in the name of God. (b) 'Behold, my servant shall deal prudently.' He seizes the moment, of all others which was sittest, to vindicate abused worth.

An instruction ever to be regarded. He that hath friends,' once more, from Prov. xviii. 24. ' should shew 'himself friendly.' If even an ordinary person's good name is his life, or bread; what shall we say to the cruel falsebood, of deferting an intimate, as to defence of character; when his necessity is greatest! Jesus is a bold example to the contrary. But, befides this, we have other clear marks of regard, in his history to the tie which more than most upon earth doth sweeten human life. St John tells us, (c) Now Jesus loved Martha, and Mary her fister and Lazarus.' Bleffed family ! ' Lord,' faid the fifters to him. by one whom they fent, ' behold he whom thou lovest is fick.' They modeftly infinuate a defire, and even kope of cure ; but leave the iffue to his own wife affection. Enough with him, and every other true friend. Yet to delay, at times, may be kind upon the whole. It was thus, in the present cafe.

a Prov. vii, 7, chap. xviii. a4. b Ha xxii, 13, e chap, xi, 15,

When Jesus heard, as above (a), he said, this sickness is not unto death,' as commonly understood, 'but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby? He does not fay, of the sudden, as 'unto the * Centurion of Capernaum (b), I will come and heal him. And again, even while on the way, 'go back to thy house, and as thou halt believed, so be it done unto thee.' At which very instant 'his servant was healed.' But kindness itself, even that of pure friendship, acts from superior motives fill, the known will of God. The greatest good, all things taken together, is the choice of such affection. . Said Martha unto Jesus (c), Lord, if thou hadit been here, my brother had not died. Jesus faith unto her, thy brother 's shall rife again.' Which brings on a discourse worthy of love indeed. It is an exercise of that which is pious, much to be admired.

And how is Mary affected! As foon as she heard of his arrival, and that he called for her, she arose quickly, and came unto him; falling down at his feet, saying, as her sister Martha had done, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping that came with her, from belief that she had gone out to the grave," to open at large the flood gates of sorrow over it, 'he groaned in spirit, and was troubled.' Who sees not, in all this, the affection of friendship! Still more, 'coming to see the place where Lazarus was laid, Jesus wept. Behold said the Jews, how he loved him.' The deduction was natural. But some of them, as may still be the case, mistook the proper measure of conduct, under a principle so sacred.

'Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave; reminds his living friends of what he had said realonn xi. 4. b Matth. viii. 7, 13. c John xi. 21, 29, 34, 35, 38,

lative to the 'glory' of God: lifts up his eyes, and faid, Father, I thank thee, that thou halt heard me,' for the fake
in particular of those who are come to be witnesses, that
they too may believe. And when he had thus spoken, he
cried with a loud voice, come forth: and he that was
dead came forth.' The improvement is obvious; and
does no small honour to devout friendship. Suspect not
rashly genuine exper enced love. Jesus, an all perfect pattern
of this, will come in season. So will every other like him,
to their best judgement.

One instance more, and the subject is complete (a). Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's lifter, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the Difciple standing by whom he loved, he faith unto his mother, woman, behold thy Son. Then faith he to the Disciple. behold thy mother. And from that hour, that Disciple took her unto his own home.' Friend ship in death conspicuous! Think now of fuch an alliance. 'If children (b), then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. For both he that fanctifieth (c), and they who are fanctified are all of one.' That is, brethren, for certain; and even friends (d). ' I am he that liveth, and was dead (e): and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell, and of death. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice (f), and open the door, I will come into him, and fup with him, and he with me. He that hath an ear, let him hear. He that hath 'my commandments, and keepeth them (g), he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my ! Father, and I will love him, and manifest myfelf to him."

² John xix. 2, 26, 27. b Rom. viii. 17. Heb. ii. 11. c John xv, 14. e Rev. i, 18. f chap. iii. 20, 22. g John xiv. 21.

SECTION X.

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF MEEKNESS.

TTELL might the Saviour of the world fay (b), come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye 's shall find rest unto your souls.' Once, and but once, we read (i), and when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts : he faith unto the man, who stood in need of his affistance. firetch forth thine hand And he stretched it out' from a fadly withered flate till then; and his hand was restored whole as the other.' They would not be convinced, who did watch him only to accuse, that 'it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath days. They held their peace,' under a fullen filence; and on that account, his anger and grief were stirred up together. 'They went forth' though unable to answer his ' wife words, and ftraightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.' Thus did hypocrites and fecular politicians unite; and knowing them to be so, he was angry indeed, but fill more grieved.

Upon another occasion, at Gedera, he displayed peculiar meeknes; for, having accomplished the cure of two furious lunaties, at some 'expence to an illicit trade in Swine, behold (k), the whole city came out to meet Jesus, and when 'they saw the person' whose case had been the most desperate 'fitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind (1), they were afraid' of more loss as to this world;

h Matth, xi, 28. i Mark iii. 5, 4, 6. k Matth, viii. 34. 1 Luke viii. 35.

and it may be too, conscious of their own demerits: 'and 'they besought him (1', that he would depart out of their 'coasts. And he entered into a ship (m) and passed fed over, and came into his own city. He would not cry, 'nor lift up (n), nor cause his voice of anger to be heard in 'their streets.' He lest them to restell; and they soon after improved by his meekness.

Learn of him who was meek and lowly in heart (0). By the 'gentleness of Christ' (p) let us all be persuaded; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again (q): when he fuffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteoufly.' When wrath is up, let us quietly withdraw; unless we are next to certain, that we shall be 'able to overcome evil with good (r). In meek-' ness instruct those who oppose themselves (s), if God, per-' adventure will give them repeatance to the acknowledging of the truth: and that they may recover themselves out of the fnare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will, with all lowliness and meekness (t), with long-· fuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace. This is to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are " called."

It is necessary to make an offer of goodness. But if people are averse to this; we must peaceably depart, or, 'waxing 'bold, like Paul and Barnabas (u),' say to the 'envious, contradicting and blaspheming: it was necessary that the 'word of God should first have been spoken unto you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves un- worthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the gentiles.'

¹ Matth. viii 34. m chap ix. t, n lfa, xlii, 3, o Matth, x, 19, p 2 Cor x r, q 1 Pet. ii. 21, r Rom xii, 21, s 2 Tim, ii 25, 20e t Eph. iv, 2, 3, 1, u Acts xiii, 46, v Matth, vii, 6,

With the utmost lenity, we 'must not give that which is 'holy unto the dogs (v), neither cast our pearls before 'swine, lest they trample them under their seet, and turn 'again to rend.' Here, it is meek to desist. 'Many good 'works have I shewed you of my Father (w); for which of those good works do ye stone me?' Behold in this, the 'meekness of wisdom (x):' and what shall we say to these last great words (y)? 'If I have spoken evil, bear witness 'of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me? Father, 'forgive them (z), for they know not what they do!' Incomparably mild Jesus.

A religious work is high and difficult. Above every other, that of religiously ministring and exemplifying. Here, tempers, offices, and capacities, are all to be studied. And who is fufficient for these things (a)? Though I be free from all 'men (b), yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I ' might gain the more. And unto the Jews, I became as a ' Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the ' law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak, became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means fave some. Thus, let every one of us please his neighbour, for his good to edification (c). For even Christ e pleased not himself; but, as it is written, the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.'

v. Matth. vii. 6. w John x. 32, x James iii. 13 y John xviii 23, z Luke xxiii 34, a 2 Cor. ii. 16. b 1 Cor, ix, 19, c Rom, xv, 2, 3,

SECTION XI.

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF PRUDENCE.

BEHOLD, said the evangelical Prophet, (a) iny servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high? Such a note of attention bespeaks the great value of this character; and it shone in Jesus illustrious throughout his whole life: more especially, when he met with sudden pressing oppositions. Till his suffering hour came, 'and the Pharisees held a counsel how they might destroy him (b); Jesus knew it, and withdrew himself from thence: to be a pattern of his own law (c), 'be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. When they persecute you in one city, slee ye into another.

'When great multitudes followed him (d), and he healed them all: he charged them, that they should not make
him known: that it might be fulfilled in him (e), he shall
not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice on
the streets.' Such beauties of character merit a high regard.
When beneficent compassion served only to exasperate his soes;
he would mildly expostulate, saying (f), 'is it lawful to do
good upon the Sabbath days, or to do evil? To save life,
or to kill?' And then, having sienced them, at least for a
time, embraced his opportunity of affording relief. Men
of any principle at all, must be softened, under such prudent
behaviour.

The times and the seasons for doctrine, for correction and instructions in righteousness, (g) he observed to asto-

a Isa, lii, 13, b Matth. xii, 14, &c, c Matth, x, 16, 13, d chap, xii, 15, 16, e Isa, xlii, 3, f Mark iii, 4, g 1 I im, iii, 15,

nishment.' When he chose to argue, persuasion, with sweetness, hung upon his lips. Compare Matth vi. 25, &c: x,
24, &c. John xiv xv, xvi. Chapters: by way of specimens.
His whole parabolical manner did shew in part, and leave
room for much subsequent profitable resection. He uses no
force, at any time, knowing, 'that the wrath of man (1),
'worketh not the righteousness of God.'

He is unintimidated and calm in midst of 'malicious obfervers! As when the Scribes and Pharisees began to reafon, saying (m), who is this which speaketh blasphemies?
Who can forgive sins, but God alone.' He redargues
with prudence, which amazed all; so that they glorised
God, and were filled with fear, saying, we have seen strange
things to day.' This, and similar examples, did evince to
demonstration that his dostrine and miracles did mutually
illustrate. Hence the divine placability is, so to speak,
brought under the eye even of bodily sense. Marvellous instructing prudence!

His whole fupernatural works, likewife, did at once explain, and enforce the duty of love, even the loss of the Swine herd, and of a barren fig-tree unexcepted. The one was a defence of the Mosaic law; the other did prefigure the entire Jewish overthrow, without repentance. Censure, originating from spiritual pride, as usually happens; he exposes with great energy and prudence, in his history of the 'Pharisee and the Publican (n).' And what shall we say, to that of the 'good Samaritan (o)?' Both astonishingly convictive!

When 'certain of the Pharifees faw our divine Saviour' go in to eat with those of suspected character (p), the 'envy'ing and narrow-minded complained to his disciples; but

Jam. i. 20. m Luke v, 21, 26, n Luke xix, 1, &c, o Chap, x, 30, &c,

not boldly to himself. He soon 'heard of this, and said, 'they that be whole need not a Physician, but they that are fick. Go ye and learn' out of your own law, 'what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am 'not come to call the righteous, but the sinner to repentance.' Handsome, prudent exposure of the self justifying Pharisee! Of salse devotion, and exterminating zeal!

Whisperers too did endeavour to discredit his life, with a view to counteract the end of his beneficent miraculous works (a). 'They murmured against his disciples, saying, 'why do ye eat with Publicans and Sinners? Again, why do the Disciples of John fast often and make prayers, and his wife the Disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?' Both receive from him an immediate wise unexpected return: and, to make the deeper impression, strongly parabolical. Here the good are taught to expect reproach from the evil-minded, however unblameable; nay useful: and therefore, to walk in wisdom, or 'prudence (b) toward them that are without.' To be at once humble and charitable; condescending to innocent customs for still greater spiritual advantages to mankind. One grain of pride is sufficient to spoil the best actions.

How amiable does the familiarity of Jesus appear, in comparison of a peevish distant pharisaic manner? It softens, captivates, and endears to a great degree. 'The Servant of the Lord,' as above said, 'shall deal prudently; therefore shall he be exalted and extolled, and raised very high. To be judiciously sociable, is quite becoming a religious teacher; vigilant, sober, and of good behaviour, given to hospitality (c): not a brawler, not covetous.' The greatest malady one can well live under, is to think of himself more

a Luke v, 30, 33. b Col, iv 5, er Tim, iii, 2, 3,

highly than he ought to think (d) - because thou sayest (e), I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked: I counsel thee, to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye falve, that thou mayest fee.' An admirably prudent measure! There is a way of submitting, to make others obey; and of granting, to demand what may be of use. The ralh and imprudent know not how to distinguish. Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble minded, ' fupport the weak, be patient toward all men (f)? Bring to each a foft healing method. ' Restore in the spirit of meekness (g); then presence and looks themselves will speak. If enemies murmur, they will do it in fecret.

SECTION XII.

nated of oldered of the publishers be been

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF UPRIGHT SIMPLICITY.

IF any man offend not in word (b), he is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. A degree of peculiar excellence in those who, by office, are obliged to speak often, and upon delicate subjects. Such an one was our bleffed Lord. He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth (i). To maintain truth, he could not please all; and yet refrained not his lips (k), from the strictest regard to it. His precepts and example, to that purpose, are

d Rom. xii. 3. e Rev. iii. 17, 18. f 1 Thef. v. 14. g Gal, vi. z. h Jam. iii. 2. i 1 Pet. ii. 12. k Pfal xl. 9.

equally illustrious. Want of caution itself he could never be charged with. 'As of fincerity, and as of God, so he always spake (1).'

'l ever taught in the fynagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always refort (m), and in secret have I said
nothing different.' His dostrine was not yea and nay, as occasions offered; but always the same (n): he only did study
what people were able to bear; the better to bring them forward. 'The time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in Proverbs (o), but I shall shew you plainly of
the Father.' The borrow which wretched Judas did suffer, are in full proof, that our blessed Lord had in him
no guile. 'I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood (p): and he cast down the pieces of silver, in the
temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.'

but faid (q), If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. How different this from one of evil design, 'walking incrastiness, and lying in wait to deceive (r). By manifestation of the truth, he commended himself to every man's conscience, in the sight of God;' further, saying (1), 'for whosoever will save his life' temporal, at the expence of truth. 'shall lose it forever: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, 'shall find it eternally. And what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or, 'what shall a man give in exchange for his soul.' Hence, after 'a good confession before Pontius Pilate (1), 'he adds, 'every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.' Ever

^{1 2} Cor. ii, 17. m John xviii. 20. n Heb xiii. 8, o John xvi. 25.

Marth xxvii. 4, 5. q Matth xvi. 24. r2 Cor iv. 2.

s Mat xvi. 25, 26. t 1 Tim vi. 13. John xviii. 27. compared.

memorable words! And worthy of him, 'in whose mouth there was no guile.

Mere professional appearances for his honour, he was at the utmost pains to discourage 'Not every one that saith unto me y), Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me, in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophessed in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Is this like one, who ever could intend to ensure mankind? Quite the reverse. 'By slight of men (z), and cunning craftiness, they lie in wait to deceive.'

He gave no quarter to people of the greatest national influence; but did rebuke them often with honest brave freedom.

Wo unto you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites; for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in (a). See that whole chapter throughout. His remonstrances are plain, strong, mortifying to assonishment. The more he suffered on these accounts, the more he rose in ardours of zeal. He was not to be overcome by the utmost force of joint political and priestly rage; but held them both in sovereign contempt, while his work was unsinished. He sets serene like the sun, amidst hurricanes of human wrath. Every where, and at all times, Tesus is great in his affection to truth. I must work the works of thim that sent me (b), while it is day: the night cometh.

y Matth. vii. 31, 22, 23, z Eph iv 14. s. Mat. xxiii. 13.

when no man can work. As long as I am in the world,

I am the light of the world."

Let thy loving-kindness, and thy truth, O Lord, con-* tinually preferve me! I will fet no wicked thing before " mine eyes (e), I hate the work of them that turn afide, it fhall not cleave to me. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies, shall not tar-"ry in my fight.' Happy they, and in the teaching line above every other, who can fay, (d) ' for our exhartation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust of the gose pel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetoutness. God is witness. So being affectionately defirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, ongt the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us."

SECTION XIII.

ud. d.d.iqud idad@piipi piipiipiipii

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE OF COMPOSURE DYING.

T was one branch of our bleffed Lord's work to shew not only how to act, but how to fuffer, and depart from this world. 'For as much as the children (a) were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them, who c Pfal, xl. 11. ci. 3, &c. d t Theff. ii. 3, 8, &c. a Heb. ii. 14, 15.

'through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage.' A truly glorious end! And wonderfully accomplished. The greatness of Jesus, in his last sufferings would require a large discourse.

Suffice it to notice, that after long and sharp endurances, 'he cried with a loud,' distinct articulated 'voice,' to indicate his yet remaining natural strength; 'and said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit; and having faid this, he gave up the Ghost.' Such placidity in prayer assonished both Jew and Gentile, in so much, 'that when the Centurion saw what was done, (b) he glorished God, faying, certainly this was a righteous man. And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned.' Heroism in its last efforts, is truly aggrandizing.

When he was reviled, (c) he reviled not again; when he fuffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. He his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree; that we being dead to sin should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye are healed. Now, even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. Follow him, in our order, through the valley of the shadow of death (d). He, the shepherd and bishop of souls (e) hath shewed that there is no evil to fear.

That which is written (f) is now brought to pass, I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave, I will be thy destruction. Death is swallowed b Luke xxiii, 46, &c, c 1 Pet, ii, 23 24, 21, d Psal, xxiii, 4, c 4 Pet, ii, 25, f Hos, xiii, 14,

'up in victory; (g) the sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin, is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' He hath trod that dreary pass before us; and manifested to us whither it leads Though a dark postern; it ends in glory. Awe, without disturbance, therefore, is becoming. Look to the sufferer, Jesus, and copy from him.

He was con'cious, as we ought to be, 'that he had done the will of him that fent him; and' nearly 'finished his work.' The best of us, imperfect as we are, will find acceptance to an upright following, through his example which was complete. 'It is a faithful faying: (b) for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we fusfer, we shall also reign with him.' Hence ought to arise our composure, in sustaining the last constitut. 'He is gone before, (i) to prepare a place for us. That they may be with him where he is; that they may behold his glory.' Extatic thought! 'And every man shall receive his own reward (k)' according to his own labour.

Jesus knew, and all the saithful thould, that his spirit would survive, and be taken care of by the Father. An assurance also made, before he died. 'I will give unto them eternal life, (1) and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My father which gave them me, is greater than all: and none is able to plack them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one. Thus, by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, (m) we have strong consolation, who have sled for resuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have, as an an-

g 1 Cor, xv, 54, 56, 57, h 2 Tim, ii. 11, 12. John xiv, 3, chap, xvii, 14 k 4 Cor, xiii, 8, 1 John x. 28, m Heb. vi, 18,

chor of the foul both fure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil: whither the forerunder is for us entered.

'Verily I say unto thee,' was, and continues to be his language to true approved penitence, (n) 'To-day thou shalt be with me in Paradise. Behold I come quickly (o). 'Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus.' What an unspeakable solacement! 'We know (p) that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. We are consident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. How great must be the gain of dying? (q) 'If 'children, heirs, (r) heirs of God, and joint heirs with 'Christ! Joy unspeakable, and full of glory! (s) Christ's 'Father is our Father, (t) and Christ's God is our God. 'Wherefore he is not ashamed (u) to call,' that is, treat us as brethren.

'To as many as receive him, (x) to them gave he power, (right, as in the margin) 'to become the fons of God; 'even to them that believe on his name. O what maniner of love is this! (y) O what a favour when every good man's order cometh (z) it must be to die! 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord 'Jesus Christ (a): by whom also we have access by faith, 'into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.' Delight inestable! The more, if we have lived not only to be, but to do good! For, 'inast-

n Luke xxiii 43 o'Rev. xxii, 20. p 2 Cor. v, 1, 8, q Phil, i, 21, r Rom, viii 17, s 1 Pet i, 8, t John xx, 17. u Heb, ii, 11. x John i, 12, y 1 John iii, 1, z 1 Cor, xv, 23, 2 Rom, v, 1, 25

much (v) as ye have done it unto one of the least of

these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. And who-

foever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones (w),

' a cup of cold water only, in the name of a Disciple, verily,

I fay unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.'

Such are allied to Jefus! And fuch are similarly affected with him! Both benevolent; and both expectants of their assured proportions. What a sweetly swelling principle, to laudable ambition! 'To be rich in good works (x)! Be ye as rulers, over many cities (y). Let us consider one another (z), to provoke unto love, and unto good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.' Thus may we all prepare to do the last great ast, with becoming dignity.

SECTION XIV.

CHRIST THE CAPTAIN OF OUR SALVATION.

'OF God,' fays St. Paul, (a) 'and through him, and 'to him are all things. So the celestial inhabi-'tants (b), thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and 'honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and 'for thy pleasure they are, and were created.' In like manner, things relative to the final and everlasting happiness of mankind; 'for, by grace are ye saved through faith, Eph. ii. 8: 'and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. 'Even when we were dead in fins, hath he quickened us to-

v Matth. xxv. 40, w clap, x, 42. x t lim, vi, 18, 19. y Matth, xxv, 20, z Heb. x, 21, 25, a Rom xi, 36, b Rev, iv, 11,

'gether with Christ; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that, in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus.' To sum up all, 'we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them. That is, be holy (c), and without blame to the utmost, before him in love: having predestinated us to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to himself.'

As is the chief, so ought his inferiors to be. 'Ye call me Lord, and Master, and ye say well (d), for so I am. Not only a witness to the people (e); but a leader and commander to the people. For I have given you an example, (f) ' that ye should do as I have done unto you. Verily, verily I fay unto you, the servant is not greater than his · Lord, neither he that is fent greater than he that fent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. All fidelity of attachment depends upon this. All fure ground of hope. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (g), who for the joy that was set before him, endured the crofs, despising the shame, and is fet down at the right hand of God. For, confider him that endured fuch contradiction of finners against himself, lest 'ye be wearied, and faint in your minds. The disciple is onot above his master (b): but every one that is perfect ' shall be as his Master.'

Ohr ft, like any other in command, at once guides, and leads on. 'For even hereunto are ye called: because Christ hath

c Rom, i 3, &c, d John xiii, 13, &c, e Ifa, lv. 4. f John xiii, 15, g Heb, xii, 2, 3, h Luke vi, 40,

· fuffered for us (a), leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps. So shall he be formed in us by faith, the hope of glory (b). The spirit of him, by operation and refemblance together (c), 'that raifed up the Lord Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken our present frail mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us. The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and o joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him. that we may be also glorified together. If any man serve me, let him follow me (d); and where I am, there shall my fervant be: if any man ferve me, him shall my Father honour. Though he were a fon, yet learned he obedience by the things which he fuffered (e); and being made per-· fect, he became the author of eternal falvation to all that obey him.'

How fit a method for infinite divine righteousness thus to take! Hereby the practibility and excellence of religious virtue is made manifest. And sherein hath the riches of his grace abounded in all wisdom and prudence (f): It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day (g): and that repentance and remission of fins should be preached in his name among all nations. * Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted (b), and having received of the Father the promife of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now fee and hear. Let all the house of Israel, know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. This is the stone which the Jewish builders despised. Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name given

at Pet. ii. 21 b Col, 1. 27, c Rom viii 11.16 17 d John xii 26. e Heb, v, 8, 9, 1 Eph. i, d. g Luke xxiv. 46, 47, h Acts ii. 33, 36,

under heaven among men, whereby we must be faved (y):

Christ the power of God (z), and the wisdom of God.'

CONTINUED.

TRUE belief is effential to chedience. 'Abide in me (a) and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itfelf except it abide in the vine : no more can ye, except ye abide in me. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the fame bringeth forth much fruit : for without me,' or fevered from me, as in the margin, ye can do nothing. Whence that warm and just exposulation of the Apostie (b). ' Examine vourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own felves: know ye not your own felves, how that Jefus · Christ is in you, except ye bereprobates? Resemblance to what he was, and is recorded by the gospels to have been, is the fureft fign of truth. ' I am crucified with Christ; neverthe-· less I live (c); Yet, not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himfelf for me. Thus by works of imitation his faith was made per-· fect (d).

Every other evidence, let men profess what they will, ought to be suspected. 'If the spirit of Christ be not in you (e), 'ye are none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is 'dead, because, or as to the affair of sin; but the spirit is life 'because, or as to the affair of righteousness. For the fruit of the spirit (f) is in all goodness, along with this and truth. He that is joined to the Lord (g), is one spirit. For ye are 'bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are Gods.' Let choice, affection, and manners be similar, to the utmost. 'Christ in you (b),

y & siv 11, 12 21 Cor. i. 24 a John xv. 4, 5. b 2 Cor. xiii, 5. c Gal, ii. 20. d Jam ii. 22, e Rom, vii. 9, 10. f Eph. v. 9. g 1 Cor. vi 17. h Col. i. 27.

'the hope of glory. He that faith, he abideth in him (b),
ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked? This is
true human and Christian perfection.

Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you (i), and abound, they make you, that ye shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even partakers of the divine nature. And so, an entrance shall be ministed unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, (k) for they shall be silled. Such, though they have not yet attained, neither are already persect (1), do press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let as many as be persect be thus minded.

SECTION XV.

CHRIST TO BE SOUGHT AFTER.

ART thou he that should come, was John Baptist's embassy to his great superior, or look we for another? And that, not so much for his own sake as to convince his Disciples. Faith then, ought to be sounded on reason or argument. For this cause, St Luke (m) wrote to his excellent friend Theophilus, that he might know the certainty of those things wherein, after a more general manner, before baptism, he had been instructed. An example to be imitated by every good pastor. Hence too,

h & John ii. 6. i 2 Pet. i, 5, &c. k Matth v 6. 1 Phil. iii. 14. 15. m. chap. i. 4.

the 'noble-minded people of Berea (a), received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.' And it is an express order, (b) 'beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God; because many false Prophets are gone out into the world. And be ready always (c), to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.'

Not only gross ignorance, but weakness of belief, and knowledge, are to be dreaded. The more means and opportunities that people have, the more they are bound to improve. 'To the poor the gospel is preached (d);' and thus, the covenant runs (e); 'and all shall know me, from the least even to the greatest. Hearken, my beloved brethren (f), it requires not abstraction, but simple honess thought, to render the most illiterate rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him. Even so, father, for so it hath seemed good in thy sight (g).' A source of pure ardent joy to the benevolence of our divine Saviour (b).

Rancorous envy among parties is a frequent hinderance to the above rational belief, as appears from the conduct of the Baptist's Disciples, in these words (i); 'and they came and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come unto him.' The forerumer's return to this complaint is admirable; 'a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him: with a great deal more to the like purpose thus sinished off: 'he must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above, is above all.

a Acts xvii, 11. b 1 John iv. 1. c 1 Pet. iii 15. d Luke vii, 27, a Heb viii 11. f Jam. ii. 5. g Matth. xi, 26. h Luke x. 21. i John iii. 26, 27, 28, 30, 31.

Do ye think (k) that the scripture speaketh in vain, the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? It is a prevailing disorder even among the learned; and devout people themselves find it to be among the very last, they are able to root out. But he giveth more grace to those who watch and are assiduous; wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

A verbal testimony, from others to important truth is not equal to what we have personal access to. Whence, said I Jesus (1), go your way, and tell John what things ye have feen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised. It is not, therefore, the will of Christ, that any should be credulous, but the contrary (m); if I bear witness of my-felf only, my witness is not true. The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me: Impostors seldom sail to aggrandize themselves; and, owing to that the bulk of mankind are in great danger. Beware of false Prophets (n), which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Wait till their fruits are better known.

I know this (0), that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away Disciples after them. Therefore watch. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly (p, for this is able to build you up (q), and to give you an inheritance among them that are functified. Sir, said the pious Greeks to the Apostle Philip (r), we would see Jesus. And they were greatly rewarded, with an assurance, that from this.

k Jam. iv. 5, 6. 1 1.uke vii 12. m John v. 31, 36. n Matth. vii. 15.

• Acts xx, 29 30. p Col. iii, 16, q Acts xx, 32, r John xii. 21, 24.

dition of such in vast multitudes unto his Church. 'Verily, 'verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die,' as was soon to be the case with himfelf, 'it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.'

Having made his foul, or life, an offering for sin, agreeable to ancient prediction (a) 'he was to see his spiritual seed, to prolong his days in them, and the pleasure of the Lord to prosper in his hand; to see the travel of his soul, and to be satisfied. By his knowledge would he justify many, till that same 'knowledge should cover the earth (b) as the waters do the sea.' Such was the pure 'mediatorial joy he had set before him (c); such the advantage to be obtained of 'seeking after Jesus. Incline your ear and come unto me (d), hear and your soul shall live: and I will make with you an everlasting covenant, even the sure mer'cies of David.'

On the other hand, 'if our Gospel be hid (e) it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them 'Deplorable state! To be cut off from 'sure, everlasting mercies; from the friendship and family of God's sirst-born, or chief. Whose house are we, (f) 'if we hold fast the considence, and the rejoicing of hope sirm unto the end. For whosever (g) shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother;' all, as it were, in one.

a 1/2, lill. 10, 17, b chap. zi. 9, c Heb xii 2. d chap. lv. 3. e 2 Cor. iv, 3, 4, f Heb. iii, 6, g Matth xii, 50,

CHRIST A PRIEST.

SECTION I.

CHRIST THE TRUE LIVING WAY.

To bring fouls to Gol, was the ultimate end of our bleffed Lord's sufferings. (a) 'And if I go, and 'prepare a place for you, (b) I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also. 'I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I: 'No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.' That now, he hath made clear and sure. With an upright aim, and suitable diligence, none can fail of admission. 'In him 'we have redemption through his blood, (c) the forgive ness of fins, according to the riches of his grace; where in he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and pruse dence'

Christ hath both will and power to keep us safe. They live in his heart, who would go to the Father by him. No time place, or 'creature shall be able to separate them (d). The more they are beset with fraud, troubles or opposition of any kind, the more he watches for their good: 'and none can pluck them out of his hand (e).' Where shall we meet with one of equal skill and power? 'My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.' I, and my Father are one. Whilst, therefore, we love, we ought to re-

^{2 1} Pet, iii. 18. b John xiv. 3, 18, 6. c Eph. i. 7, 8. d Rom. viii. 39; e John x. 28, 29, 30,

vere him, who is, at once, accessible, and vested with high sovereign authority.

'Lord, I am not worthy, that thou shouldst enter under 'my roof; but say, in a word, (f) and my servant shall be healed.' Wonderful, exemplary Roman Centurion! He saw earlier than many Jews, who had superior advantages, and selt, that 'grace was poured into his lips; (g) and that in Majesty he did ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness.'

Let us be grateful to the Lord Gol Almighty, for appointing us a place under so much coefficial power and love. Blessed is the people, that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day (b): and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted. Such discoveries of pardon, strength, and enjoyment, fill the pious soul with peace in believing, peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. It requires no severe application even from the inliterate poor. All that he requires is, that they be docile. My sheep hear my voice, (i) and I know them, and they follow me That is, in an honest and good heart, (k) having heard the word, they keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

Thus 'Mary, the fifter of Lazarus, fat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word;' of whom, he says to Martha (1), who, though well inclined, was rather too much cumbered at the time with serving; 'one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.' A mark of grace, then, which may be absolutely depended upon. Perhaps, nay for certain, there is not any other that can equal it.

f Luke vii. 6, 7. g Pfal. xlv. 2, 4, h Pfal. lxxxix. 15, 16, i John x. 27. k Luke viii 15. l Luke x 39 &c.

SECTION II.

SALVATION BY CHRIST.

MIDST all our uncertainties about divine government, we ought to rest in this, that ' the judge of all the earth will do right (a). He cannot deny himself, (b) or ' lie, (c)' or be unjust. Yet his permissions are often expresfed by the words appoint and ordain, where things are criminal. To be explained in confishence with what St. James fays, (d) 'God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man.' Likewise as follows, (e) 'for God hath onot appointed us to wrath: but to obtain falvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake, or fleep, we should live together with 'him.' His will is, 'that no man should perish; but that 'all should come to the knowledge of him, and be faved.' 'God waits to be gracious;' and encourages the worst of ' finners, to repent, and turn to him, and do works that ' are meet for repentance. Verily, verily, I fay unto you, (e) ' he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that fent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into ' condemnation : but is passed from death unto life.' What this is, in full extent, 'eye hath not feen, (f) nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man' to conceive. Yet what we now most admire, for the sake of ease, and reasonable delight, are made use of in scripture, to fet these things forth. 'As a building of God; (g) ahouse not made with hands; eternal in the heavens.' Being members of a glorious celestial community. An 'in-'numerable company of angels;' whom we shall then equal (h): A city enlightened by the 'glory of God, and of

a Gen xviii, 5. b 2 l'im, ii, 13, c H b vi. 18. d chip, i, 13, e t Thess v 9, 10 f John v, 24 g t Car, ii, 9, h 2 Cor v, 1, i Heb, xii, 22, Mat, xii 30, compared,

the lamb(b); where the 'spirits of the just' shall be 'made 'perfect (i); as kings and priests unto God (k): How enrapturing all this.

Death to such, is 'swallowed up in victory, or life (1);
of all kindreds, and nations, and people, and tongues (m),
which no man can number, standing before the throne,
clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; crying with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God,
which sitteth upon the throne, and to the lamb. Having
crowns of life (n); crowns of glory (o); crowns incorruptible (p). The Lord God will wipe away tears from
all saces (q); and there shall be no more death, neither
forrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain:
(r) for the former things are passed away. And behold, I make all things new.'

What an assemblage of rich figures! Yet, 'it doth not appear what we shall be (s); Only, we shall be like Christ, and see him as he is. Who shall change our vile body (t), that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. When he shall come to be gloristed in his saints (u), and to be admired in all them that believe. A glorious church (x), not having spot, nor wrinkle, or any such thing: but that it should be holy, and without blemish.

How great, under him who is Most High, is our obligation to Jesus Christ. 'All things are of God (7). Of 'him (2), are ye in Christ Jesus, who, of God is made un-'to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and 'redemption.' Let us regularly exercise our leisure wak-

h Rev, xxi 23, i Heb, xii, 23, k Rev, i, 5, l 2 Cor, v, 4, m Rev, vii, 9, 10, n James i. 12, o 1 Pet, v, 4, p 1 Cor, ix, 25, q lfa xxv, 9, r Rev, xx 4 5, s 1 John ii, 2, t Phil, iii, 21, a 2 Theff. i, 10, x Eph. v. 27, y 2 Cor, v, 18, z 1 Cor, i, 30.

ing hours to Christian duties. 'Be examples to believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit (a), in faith, in purity. Hold forth the word of life to them that are without. Shine as lights in the world. Strive to excel. To be devout, beneficial,' and to lofe as few opportunities as possible. Warn them that are unruly (b), comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man: but ever follow that which is good, both among vourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, in every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things: hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace fanctify vou wholly. And I pray God, your whole spirit, and foul, and body be preferved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jefus Christ.'

SECTION III.

JESUS THE LAMB OF GOD.

SPEAKING of Messiah times, the evangelical prophet says,

(c) All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. In such form, and by way of vision, we may well believe, he was held forth to the baptist, who, (d) when he saw as Tim, iv, 12, b 1 Thess, v, 14. &c. c chap, liii, 6, 7, d John i, 29.

'Jesus coming unto him, could say, behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' Thus he knew and spoke of him, after he saw 'the spirit descend

and abide upon him (a).

So likewise in vision did he appear to the 'beloved Disci'ple (b); a lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns,'
emblems of 'great power; and seven eyes,' emblems of
'deep penetration,' with ability to send forth his 'know'ledge into all the earth. For, it pleased the Father (c),
'that in him all sulness should dwell; and having made
'peace, through the blood of his cross, by him, to reconcile
'all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be
'things on earth, or things in heaven. And ye are com'plete in him (d), which is the head of all principality and
'power.' Able, therefore, to take away sin.

This is either a 'transgression of the law (e), or, a want of conformity; as St. James fays (f). To him that 'knoweth to do good, and doth it not, to him it is fin.' Both are liable to punishment, unless graciously forgiven. To affure fuch pardon, upon repentance, our bleffed Lord did not only preach, but suffer. He died to seal the truth in his blood; to take away every just ground of despair, in a clear pomiffery covenant. This excludes none who come to · Christ (g), weary and heavy laden' with their past trespoffer; desirous to 'take his yoke upon them, and learn of him.' For demonstrating his ability to forgive, even while upon earth he did so, faying (b), man, thy fins, which have caused thee so much trouble of body, ' are forgiven thee. And, taking up that whereon he lay,' when brought to him all over palfied, ' he departed to his own house, glori-'fying God.'

a John i 33. b Rev. v 6. e Col. i 19, 20 d chap, ii. 10, e 1 John iii. 4. f James iv. 17. g Matth. xi 28, 29. h Lute v. 20.

The whole together prove, that 'he was the Lamb of God. If we walk,' after humbly confessing our sins, 'in the light (b), as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanse seth us from all sin. Yes; he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness: we have an Advocate in him with the Father (i); and he is the propitiation for our sins,' the same as 'mercy seat; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole penitent world. Able to save them to the utmost that come unto God by him (k).'

How abundant, therefore, is our confolation? He is no less fitted to remove the dominion, than the punishment of sin.

'A princely Saviour. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power (1), in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

'The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall fend the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou, in the midst of thine enemies. He shall drink of the brook in the way; therefore shall he lift up the head. I can do all things (m) through Christ which strengtheneth me. He shall not sail, nor be discouraged (n), till he hath set judgement in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.'

'Thou art worthy to take the book (0), and to open the feals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God, Kings and Priests! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Amen (p). Blessing and

h I John i. 7 9 - i chap ii, 1, 2. k Heb. vii. 25. l Pfal cx 3, 1, 2, 7. m Phil iv. 3. n lfa. xlii 4 o Rev, iv 9, 10, 13. p chap. vii. 124

glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen. 'What a fearful thing must it be to sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth! 'There remaineth no more facrifice for fins, but a fearful looking for of judgement, and fiery indignation, to consume the adversaries. Therefore we are buried with him into death (q): that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. He gave himself for us (r), that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himfelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works. For as much as ye know (1), that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as filver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your Fathers: but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without . blemish and without spot.'

SECTION IV.

and well and described the second

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER.

THE Jewish Feast of unleavened bread,' wherein a 'lamb was stain, did but faintly adumbrate the death of Christ. 'He, as our passover, is sacrificed for us (t); therefore let us keep the seast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.' Says St. John, (u) 'After one of the soldiers, with a spear, had pierced our blessed Lord's side, and forthwith came there out blood and water: for these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled,' spoken originally of the above

p Heb. x. 26, 27. q Rom. vi. 5. r Tit, ii. 14, s 1 Pet. l. 18, 13. 1 Cor. v, 7, 8. u John xix. 36.

paschal Lamb (a). 'A bone of him shall not be broken.'
To keep up the memory of that whole important sall was the reason wherefore 'he took bread (b), and gave thanks, 'and brake it, and gave it unto his Apostles, saying, this is 'my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me, Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, this cup 'is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.'

Truths of the highest nature, for affecting one who attends to them with knowledge and conviction. Thus do 'they. grow up into him in all things, which is the head (c); they and he become one, as to choice, affection, and conduct. These, through time and frequent repetition, settle into a fixed babit, or temper. Whence those words of 'powerful 'energy (d) I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I · live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. And again, (e) ' where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from e glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.' This pure fervent gratitude is inseparable from an upright belief. · For I determined (f) not to know any thing among you. · fave Jesus Christ and him crucified! By him therefore let " us offer the facrifice of praise to God continually, that is, (g) ' the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.' In proportion to recollected worth, so will esteem rife.

Bleffed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

(b) who hath bleffed us with all spiritual bleffings in heavenly places in Christ. For this cause (i) I bow my
knees to him, of whom the whole samily in heaven and
a Ex xii, 46. Luke xxii 19, 20 c Eph. iv. 15. d Gal ii 20.
e 2 Cor. iii, 17, 18, f 1 Cor, ii. 2. g Heb. xiii 15. h Eph. i. 3, &c, 1 chap. iii. 14, &c.

n.

as

ks,

is

ce

up

ds

y.

;

1.

a

1

I

h

f

earth is named, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might, by his spirit in the inner man: that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all faints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.' What exercises either for delight or profit, can equal these? Thus the pious soul doth sweetly move and live. 'He, who is fairer than the children of men (a;' is every thing to them, that God is in himself; their Lord or King, their lawgiver, saviour and judge.

Christ's death is the facrifice of propitiation; or that which led to his becoming our mercy-feat; our fure peace and bappiness for both worlds, upon amendment. 'Thus it is written, (b) and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to frise from the dead on the third day; and that repentance and remission of fins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. The facrifice of Christ is to be understood as the feal of each. Unto you first. (c) God having raised up his ion Jesus, sent · him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' His whole religion is a covenant law; and his blood is the folemn covenant rite thereof, . fhed for many, (d) for the remission of fins. Who his ownself bare our fins in his own body, on,' or to the tree; that we being dead to fin should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes we were healed."

Malicious wickedness is altogether inconsistent with the pure Christian Passover Feast; anger, revenge, and bitter zeal, more than most things else. Thou that makest thy 2 Psal xlv. 2, b Luke xxiv. 40, 47. c Acts in. 26. d Mat, xxvi. 28.

boast of the law,' may not here be inapplicable, through breaking the law, dishonourest thou God (e)? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you.' On the other hand, nothing doth more adorn the high and holy Christian Profession, than the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 'Let a man examine himself, (f) and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. Come not together unto condemnation.'

SECTION V.

mendend adard ad ad a proprio proprio pro-

CHRIST'S LAST SUFFERINGS NOURISH THE

ERILY, verily, I say unto you,' are remarkable words from the mouth of Jesus; (a) 'except ye eat the siesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my siesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my siesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my siesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.' Without frequent serious meditation on Christ's last sufferings and death, there can be no sufficient mutual union to save any one; for thus do we spiritually eat and drink. The siesh, or letter-sense of the above expressions, 'prosite eth nothing.'

Think, O Believer, how full of affection Jesus was when he uttered these words; (b) 'Little children, yet a little 'while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, whither I go, ye cannot come, so now I say

eRom. ii. 23, 24. f : Cor xi. 28, 3t. a John vi 53, &c. b John xiii. 33.

gh

ne

1.

nd ity

m ve

e

Into you.' No wonder that forrow filled their hearts! But it was on that very account a special opportunity to exhort them, as follows, 'A new commandment I give into you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' He next solaces them at great length, chapters xiv xv. xvi. throughout, and like a brother divides grief with them. His own example in dying, was to be the model of theirs. 'And we ought,' when need is, (e) 'to lay down our lives for the brethren.'

What, may we suppose, was our bleffed Lord's sympather tic feelings, when he instituted the faered memorial of his broken body, and shed blood? It was a hequeathment or legacy to them and his church, most tender'y solemn. A token in death, perhaps, not without tears. 'My body! My blood! How generous! How affecting! He knew all things * that should come upon him (f); and yet he thus speaks. Being made like unto his brethren,' though 'without fin.' He foresees a thick succession of tortures and indignities with forrow, even to agony; and his fweat was as it were * great drops of blood, (g) falling to the ground. His relief was prayer and submission: Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him: he was heard, in that he was devout; as in the margin (h).

Thus 'strengthened by him that was able to fave him 'from' the horrors of 'death,' in due season; "that the world' ever after, 'might know that he loved the Father, (i) 'and as the Father gave him commandment, even so he

d John xiii, 34, 35. e r John iii. 16. f John xviii. 4. g Luke xxii 44, 42, 43. h Heb. v. 7, i John xiv 36.

did. Arise,' were his next high words of composure to the 'Apostles, let us go hence.' Behold, he is at hand that doth betray me; (k) Judas also which betrayed him knew the 'place: for Jesus oft times resorted thither with his disciples. (1) 'He had also given them a sign, (m) saying, whomsoever 'I shall kiss, that same is he, hold him sast.' Ah, good God, what an abuse of trust! what a severe trial! 'And 'forthwith he came to Jesus and said, hail, Master. And 'Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? 'Judas (n), betrayest thou the son of Man with a kiss?' In contemplating this, every discordant revengeful thought must cease. Much more every rash contumelious word.

And how did our 'Bleffed Lord receive the band of men, and officers from the chief priests and pharifees (o), thus led on? 'He faid unto them, whom feek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus faith unto them, I am he. As foon then as he had faid unto them, I am s he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.' He fhews them, what worse might have been done; but suffers them to rife again. 'Then asked he them as before, whom ' feek ye? And they' still repeat, ' Jesus of Nazareth. · Jefus answered, I have told you that I am he; if therefore ye feek me let these' my disciples ' go their ways." Hence it is clear, that 'no man took his life from him,' as he had faid; this he had entirely put into his own power. But it was ' his meat to do the will of him that fent him, (p) and to finish his work. He loved us, and gave himfelf for us, an offering, and a facrifice to God for a fweet fmelling favour (q); it was friendship in death, and may be imitated. 'Nor is God unrighteous, to forget your work, and labour of love (*).

k viai. xxvi 46. 1 John xviii 3. m Mat. xxvi. 48. 47. n Luk xxii. 48 o John xviii. 4, 5. chap x. 18, p John iv, 34. q Eph, v, 2, r Heb. vi, 10.

h

Simon Peter having a fword, (1) drew it, and fmote the High Priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. whom Jesus said, Peter, put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father giveth me to drink, shall I not ' drink it? And' unto the fervant, (t) ' fuffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.' How great is Jesus here! Well might he say, as it is written, (u) ' I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is in my heart. Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews, took Jesus and bound him (x).' He is not insensible to this ignominy. Are ye come out against me ' as a thief in the night, with swords and staves, for to take " me?' Words out of the mouth of unrivalled usefulness truly affecting! 'This is thank-worthy, (9) if a man for confcience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

CONTINUED.

Cease ye from man (b), whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of? It is better to trust in the Lord (c), than to put considence in princes Now the chief priests and elders; and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus to put him to death, yet sound they none (d). Their suborned testimenies did not agree. The High Priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, (e) and of his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world: I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing different. Why

s John xviii, 10, 11, t Luke xxii. 51 u Pial, xl, 7, 8, x John xviii, 12, y 1 ret, ii, 19, a Mat, xxvi, 56. b lia, ii, 22, c rial cxviii, 9, d Mat, xxvi, 60, e John xviii, 19, &c,

'askest thou me? Ask them which heard me, what I have 'said unto them: behold, they know what I have said.' His defence of human right is calm, and judicious. It was also seasonable. 'Yet, when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, answerest thou the High Priest so! Jesus answered him, if I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?' What composure! What propriety of conduct is here! He had right thus to instruct, (a) 'ye have heard that it hath been said, 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil. When he suffered (b), 'he threatened not; but committed himself to him that 'judgeth righteously.' A mild return is hereby dignisted.

"Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas, (c) unto the Hall of Judgement: and it was early, and they themselves went not into the Judgement Hall, less they should be ceremonially desiled: but that they might have leave to eat the Passover; straining at, or out, a gnat, (d) and swallowing a camel. They scruple bodily desilement, but not to murder. The beathen, more just than they, refers them to their own law; when they acknowledge, (e) that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death. In other words, as foretold, (f) that the sceptre was fairly departed from Judah; and that now Shiloh must be come; the great expected Messiah. The death of crucifiction, which they wished for to Jesus, was a Roman one.

Pilate, however, fees no fault in him, after a ferious and long examination, (g) 'No fault at all.' He questions him as to his kingship, from what the Jews had faid, receives an answer fully sufficient to prove his innocence;

a Math, v. 38, 39, b i Peter ii. 23, c John xviii, 28, &c, d Mat, xxiii, 14 e John xviii, 31. f Gen, xlix, 10, g John xviii. 33.

ve

d.'

as

of

of

e-

of

1-

ıt 1,

y

,

t

1

S

yet, being destitute of strict principle, he is at a loss how to behave himself. Wretched man! Great and heroic sufferer! A good consession verily! (a) 'He went out again unto the Jews (b); and, as they had a custom that one should be released at the Passover,' proposes the release of Jesus, the alleged king of the Jews! 'Then cried they all again, saying, not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a Robber.' Unexampled preference! Hideous indignity!

Pilate takes a different, and rather more cruel measure to abate the Jewish rage, though with just as little good effect. 'Then took he Jesus (c), and scourged him. And the foldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him' a like mock ' purple robe. And faid, hail, king of the Jews, and they smote him with their hands. Pilate, therefore, went forth again, and faith unto them. Behold, I bring him forth unto you, that ye may know, that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate faith unto them, be-' hold the' already too miserable infignificant 'man. When the chief priests therefore, and officers saw him, they cried out, faying, crucify him, crucify him! Horrible wantonness of vice! And yet no complaint from the mouth of him who fuffered. Being 'reviled, (d) he reviled not again, but is gloriously filent. 'Wrath is cruel (e), anger ' is outrageous; but who can stand before envy?' Between conviction, and popular uproar, what must not Pilate, by this time, have felt?

The Jewish ground, for their demand, torment the governor still more. As he was able, from fright, he takes Jesus

a I Tim, vi, 13. b John xviii, 39, &c. c chap, xix, I, d I Pet, ii, 23. e Prov, xxvii 4,

afide once more ' into the judgement-hall, and faith unto him, whence art thou?" A question of too much comprehension, to obtain an answer. The ruffled breast, from undutifulness, is foon put into a passion. But our blessed Lord knew, as he taught (e), that there is a time to speak. He leaves Pilate to his own reflections, after suggesting (f) that bad as he was, he was not the worst of his present persecutors. From thenceforth, Pilate fought to release him : but the · Iews cried out, faying, if thou let this man go, thou art not Cefar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a King ' speaketh against Cesar.' Policy, as often happens, prevails against right. The dastard ruler superstitiously washes his hands, to wash out one of the groffest immoral acts (g); ' faying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person : fee 'ye to it. Then answered all the people, and faid, his blood be on us, and on our children!' Dreadful imprecation! And yet fadly felt!

CONTINUED.

HEN released he Barabbas unto them, and when he had scourged Jesus, for a second time; he delivered him to be crucified. The soldiers of the governor next took Jesus, into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole officiating band at the time; and they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, yet more conspicuous, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, hail, King of the Jews. And they spit upon him, and took the reed and smote him on the head. Then stripping him of his mock royal ensigns: they led him away to crucify him. To these, and every other mark e Matth. vii, 6, f John xix. 11, 12, g Matth, xxvii, 24, 23, 26, 27,

nto

re-

du-

w,

ves

ad

rs.

the :

art

ng ils

his);

lee .

nis

a-

ne

li-

Or

nrd

id

11-

ht

d

n

m

·k

of difgrace which did follow him to Golgotha, the place of execution, he makes no reply; but leaves it to their own minds, and his former life, to speak for him 'He is brought as a lamb to the flaughter (z), and as a sheep before her fhearers is dumb, fo he openeth not his mouth.'

Under the pressure of a heavy cross, and that the severest accomplishment of their scheme might not be frustrated, ' they compelled Simon of Cyrene to bear it in part.' One, after this, from friendship it would feem, ' gave him vinegar to drink (a), mingled with gall: and when he had 'tafted,' by way of 'courteous return he would not drink,' what had a tendency to flupify fensation both of body and mind; but would bear all with becoming composure, patience, and fortitude. 'And they crucified him with two others (b), who were malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.' Jesus lifted up in the midst, as more deserving to die, than either a thief or a feditious murderer. Mysterious beaven! But, as himself fays (c), ought not 'Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory? Thus it behoved him to fuffer, and to rife from the dead on the third day. And that repentance, and remission of

fins should be preached in his name among all nations."

And now, while his hands and his feet are nailing to the cross, Jesus said (d), Father forgive them, for they

know not what they do.' He pleads from the most extenuating circumstances, and no doubt he was heard: for,

when the Centurion faw what was done, he glorified God, faying, certainly this was a righteous man. And all the

people, that came together to that fight, beholding the

things that were done, fmote their breasts and returned.

· Love your enemies (e), bless them that curse you, do good

z Isa liii. 7. a Matth. xxvii 34. b Luke xxiii 32. c Luke xxiv, 26, 46, 47. d Luke xxiii 34, 47. 48. e Matth. v. 44.

to them that hate you, and pray for them which despite-

fully use you, and persecute you. Dearly beloved (f),

e avenge not yourselves but rather give place unto wrath;

for it is written, vengeance is mine, and I will repay, faith

the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him;

if he thirst, give him drink; for in fo doing, thou shalt

heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil,

but overcome evil with good.'

Tofus finishes off his public life, as he carried it through, in acts of mercy and love. Whilst hanging on the cross, he tranfacts a work of fignal exemplary goodness. 'For as one of the malefactors which were hanged, railed on him, faving, if thou be Christ, fave thyself and us; the other answering, (g) ' rebuked him, faying, doft not thou fear God feeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed just-! ly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds ; but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus. Lord, remember me, when thou comest to thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, verily, I say unto thee, to day thou shalt be with me in paradise.' Here he afferts, though after an indirect manner, his own high character; and with the utmost precision his attachment to fincere peni- . tent belief He dies as he had lived, doing good to proper objects. O the incomparable worth of 7 fus? Who for the joy that was fet before him, endured the crofs (b), defpifing the shame, and is fet down at the right hand of the

throne of God. Such is the author and finisher of our faith.
And I give unto them eternal life (i), and they shall never

e perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

When Jesus saw his mother, and the Disciple standing

by whom he loved, he faith unto his Mother, woman, be-

f Rom. xii. 19, &c. g Luke xeiii. 39, &c, h Heb, xii, 2, 3 John x, 28,

fpite-(f), rath; faith nim; fhalt evil,

h, in ranne of ing, ing, eing justthis fus, om.

day
rts,
er;
eniber
for
dethe

ng be-

20

ver

'hold thy Son;' or one who will care for thee as such:
'then saith he to the Disciple, behold thy Mother. And
'from that hour, that Disciple took her unto his own home.'
What an off-stionate relative is Christ! And what a friend!
Remember his words, so as to act upon them (k), 'It is
'more blessed to give than to receive.' A legacy of trust, however dissicult, is mutually acceptable among them who love.

After three full hours in 'agony, he cried with a loud voice (1), to indicate his yet remaining natural strength, and faid, It is finished; Father, into thy hands I commend 'my spirit: and having said thus, he bowed his head, and gave up the Ghost (m). Blessed are the dead which die 'in the Lord (n) from henceforth: yea, faith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep (o), that ye ' forrow not even as others, which have no hope: for, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them 'also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.' Well might he fay (p), ' my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Let us who are of the day (q), be fober, putting on the breast plate of faith, and love; and for an Lelmet, the hope of falvation.'

The life and pleasure of the Lord Jesus is materially bound up in such. 'As the living Father hath sent me;' are his own words (r), 'and I live by the Father: so he 'that spiritually eateth me,' or doth often devoutly meditate upon my last great sufferings, 'even he shall live by 'me.' Superior cherishing succour to this, they need not. 'For in him all the building sitly framed together (s),

k Acts xx. 35. 1 Luke xxiii. 6. m John xix. 30. n Rev. xiv, 13. ot Thei iv. 1, 14. p John vi 55. q 1 Thei, v, 8. r John vi, 57. s Epi, v, 21, 24,

groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; for an habitation of God through the spirit. They are Chirst's (a), and Christ is God's.' How happy a state is this! 'Let not your heart be troubled (b): ye believe in God, believe also in me' Others seem to say, by their indifference, that Christ died in vain. 'And how can they escape (c)?' This is to the last degree ungrateful. 'He that hateth me, (d) 'hateth my Father also. Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind (e), striving together for the faith of the gospel.'

SECTION VI.

CHRIST THE CHIEF CORNER STONE.

CAID St. Peter to the Jews (f), 'ye men of Ifrael, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and figns, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye your-· felves also know: him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and flain: whom God hath raifed up, having loofed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. Therefore know affuredly, that God hath made that fame Jefus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. fhall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be faved. Neither is there falvation in, or by 'any other (g); this is the stone which was fet at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.' Compare Pfal cxviii. 22. Luke xx. 17.

· Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture (b), be-

² f Cor, iii. 23. b John xiv f. c Heb. ii. 23. d John xv 23. e Phil i. 17, f Acts ii. 22, 36, 21, &c g chap. iv. 12, 11. h : Pet. ii. 6, 7, &c.

t

2,

h

d

e

t

t

e

hold, I lay in Zion a chief Corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Nay, unto you which believe, he is precious. One principle ground of Jewish offence was, his low outward estate. They were full of the world. They had conceived in their minds nothing less than an universal dominion under the Messiah. Meeting with disappointment in this their favourite object, neither dostrine nor miracle could satisfy them. Whence hath this man this wisdom (b), and these mighty works? Is not this the Carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, or other nearest kinssolk, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, of equally low condition, are they not all with us? And they were offended at him (i).

The strength of this prejudice did affect, at sirst, even so ingenuous a mind as 'Nathaniel's (k); to whom Philip 'said, we have found him of whom Moses in the law, and 'the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of 'Joseph. And Nathaniel said unto him, can there any such 'good thing as you now speak of, come out of Nazareth?' A village so mean, so contemptible. The influence of early wrong instruction is to be dreaded and guarded against. Whereas, the Jews, without knowing it, did accomplish these ancient oracles (1), 'he, to wit Christ, shall grow up before him as a 'tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath 'no form nor comeliness: and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should defire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with gries: and we hid, as it were, our faces from him.'

They became quite averse, when, though with great delecacy and tenderness, he foretold their final overthrow. Therefore fore say I unto you, agreeable to Psal cxvi. 22, as above, h Matth. xiii 54, 55, i Mark vi 2. k John i. 4., &c, 1 1sa. Siii 2 &c,

the kingdom of God shall be taken from you (m), and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whofoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken; but on whomfoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief Priests, and Pharifees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they fought to lay hands upon him, they feared the 'multitude, because,' as yet, and justly, 'they believed him to be a Prophet.' Afterwards they become more refolved (n); 'And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high Priest that same year, said unto them, ye know nothing at all; nor confider that it is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' Impious, fatal policy! 'They made a pit, and digged it, and have long fince fallen into the ditch which they made (o). Their conceived mischief hath returned upon their own head, and their violent dealing hath come down upon their own pate. Their place and nation, as once it was, hath long been taken away.

Jesus indeed did die for all of this 'people who would be 'faved, and not for them only, but that also he should 'gather together the children of God that were scattered 'abroad.' The words of Gairphas are over-ruled to hold forth a signal beneficial truth. Christ's place in the church is, by their means, now the most conspicuous and useful. 'He hath made, of both converted Jews, and Gentiles, one; 'and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between them (p): For through him, we both have an access by one spiritunto the Father. And are built upon the soundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone. In whom all the building, fitly

m Matth xxi 43 &c. n John xi 49, &c. o Pfal, vii, 15, 16, 51, 52, PEph, ii, 18, 20, 21, 22,

framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; for an habitation of God through the spirit. All

nd

nd

nt

er.

is

ut

1e

d

e-

e

)-

e

,

' the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (a); all one in him.'

How simple, and yet affecting in this view, stands the death of Chrift? This is the Lord's doing, (b) and it is marvellous in our eyes.' Hereby divine wisdom, power, holineis, justice, or righteousness, are set forth to assonishment. Being found in fashion as a man (c), he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the crofs. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and e given him a name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.' How fweet a cordial to true believers ! . To him coming (d), as unto a living stone, disfallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood, to offer up fpiritual facrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.'

SECTION VII.

JESUS A MEDIATOR.

IT became him,' fays the author of the epiftle to the Hebrews, (e) ' for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many fons into glory, to make the captain of their falvation perfect through fufferings.' The manger and the stable began his bumble outward condition, whom the angel of love (f) did thus ce-

a Gal, iii, 26, 28 b Mat. xxi, 42. c Phil. ii. 8. d r Pet. ii. 4. c chap. ii, 10, f Luke ii

lebrate: 'fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is 'Christ the Lord. He grew up before him,' agreeable to the 'prophet Isaiah's prediction (c), as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor come-'liness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of forrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from him: he was defpised, and we esteemed him not. Yea, by the grace of · God,' after a life of great labour and usefulness to perishing fouls, ' he did tafte death for every man; that for the fuffering of death (d) he might be crowned with glory and honour. That is, when he had, by himself, purged our fins, (e) fat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high'

Thus is 'Christ our Mediator;' for his own words are, (f) 'No man cometh unto the Father, but by me. 'And whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, 'that will I do, that the Father may be gloristed in the Son. Of him (g) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is 'made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and fanctification, and redemption. All things are of God, (h) who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ. For there is one God, (i) and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ranfom for all, to be testified in due time Having predestinated us, Gentiles, unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; to the praise of the glory of his grace (k),

c chap. liii, 2, &c. d Heb. ii 9. e chap i 3 f John xiv. 6, 13, g i Cor. i 30, h 2 Cor, v. 18, i 1 Tim, ii. 5, 6, k Eph. i. 5. 6.

wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. All that the Father giveth me, (1) shall come to me; and he that cometh to me, I will in nowife cast out?

of

S

9

d

:• y

t

His retinue will be immense, and from all quarters. (m) 'I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the · lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, faying, falvation to our God which fitteth upon the throne, and unto the · lamb. To us (n) there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him: and one Lord Jefus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Now a Mediator is not of one (0), but transacts between parties. 'And Christ is the Mediator of a better covenant,' than that under Mofes, being established (p) upon better promises. 'I go to prepare a place for you in my Father's house, (a) that where I am there ye may be also. Every man shall receive his own reward, (r) according to his own labour.

Being made perfect, (s) he, Christ, became the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him. When thou shalt make his soul (t) an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities; and make intercession for the transgressors. And let us run with patience, (u) the race set before us; looking unto Jesus, the author and sinisher of our faith,

¹ John vi. 37. m Rev vii. 9 10 n t Cor. viii 6 o Gal. iii. 20. p Heb. viii. 6. q John xiv. 3. r 1 Cor. iii. 8. s Heb. v. 9. t Ifa. liii. 10, 11 12. n Heb. xii. 1, 2.

who, for the joy that was fet before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God.' Behold and see, if ever any leaser on to glory was like unto ours. He is therefore made rich in mediatorial recompense. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (x), because he continueth ever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; (y) and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation.'

How becoming is all this to the divine love, boliness and justice? Being justified freely by his grace, (z) through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath · fet forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God: to declare, I fay, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. For, if when we were enemies (a), we were reconciled to God, by the death of his fon; much more being reconciled we ' shall be faved by his life. Christ also hath once suffered for fins. (b) the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit. Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities, and powers being made subject unto him.' How wise! How transcendent! 'Glory to God in the highest, (c) and on earth peace, good will towards men.'

^{*} Heb. vii. 22. 24. y chap. ix 28. z Rom. iii. 14. &c. a chap v. 10. b t l'et. iii. 18, 23. c Luke ii. 14.

CONTINUED.

O o then, (a' after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and fat on the right 'hand of God' In which words there may be an al-'lusion to Dan. vii. 13, 14. 'I faw in the night visions, and behold one like the fon of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.' This must be understood of the gospel progress, with its future effects. 'Go ye into all the world, (b) and preach the gof-' pel to every creature' of reason. ' He that believeth and is baptized shall be faved; but he that believeth not fhall be damned. And these figns shall follow them that believe, In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall fpeak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the fick, and they shall recover.'

The bleffings to be confirmed by these miracles were, pure spiritual improvement, and everlassing joy. Such as would fill up all the human faculties. 'Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst for any thing better; (c) 'but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlassing life. And God hath put all things under his feet (d), and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the sulness of him that filleth

a Mark xvi. 19. b Mark xv'. 16, 17 18. c John iv, 14. d Eph. i. 22, 23.

'all in all. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, (e) I will do it. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Yea, the Father himself loveth you, (f) because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.' In such sulness 'the Holy Ghost was not given (g) till Jesus was glorisied.' That is, 'taken up to heaven.'

But ye shall receive power (b), after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the outermost parts of the earth. And when he had fpoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their fight, into heaven. For he must reign, (i) till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be defroyed is death? How fit a subject for celestial benevolence to celebrate! 'And are they not all ministring spirits (k) 'fent forth by him to minister for them who shall be heirs of falvation! Thus, they too obediently worthip him. Or own the truth, or fay, that a few plain fishermen, with a publican and tent-maker, did enlighten, reform, and new model the whole earth. 'Their words have been · heard' with fuccess, ' unto the ends of the world (/).'

Having such a glorious friend in heaven, 'let us be stead'fast, and unmoveable, always abounding in the works of
'the Lord (m). Let us not faint, nor be weary in our
'own minds,' even under fore trials. 'Lo, I am with you
'always (n). And who shall separate us from the love of
'him, who hath all power given unto him (o)? I can do

e John xiv. 14, 16, 17. f chap, xvi. 27. g chap. vii 39, h Acts i, 8, &c. i I Cor, xv. 25. 26, k Heb, i, 14, 6 l Rom, x, 18, m 1 Cor, xv, 58, n Mat, xxviii, 20, o Rom, vii, 35,

11

u

ſe

ıt

t

P

'all things (a) through Christ which strengtheneth me.
'In the world (b) ye shall have tribulation; but be of good
'cheer, I have overcome the world. How soon shall
'mortality be swallowed up of life (c)? Wherein ye great'ly rejoice (d), though now for a season, if need be; ye are
'in heaviness, through manifold temptations. That the
'trial of your faith, being much more precious than of
'gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be
'found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appear'ing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love;
'in whom, though now ye see him not, ye rejoice with joy
'unspeakable, and full of glory: receiving the end of your
'faith, even the salvation of your souls. Who, by him do
'believe in God, that raised him from the dead, and gave
'him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God.'

SECTION VIII.

CHRIST AN INTERCESSOR.

So certain are the promises held out by our divine Saviour that, in his large intercessory prayer (e), they are more than once spoken of, as already bestowed. 'And the glory which thou gavest me,' that is by solemn destination, 'I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them,' as follows, 'and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. Father, I will,' explains this fully, 'that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast,' as above, 'given me: for thou lovedst me, before the soundation of the world.' Where it may

a Phil, iv. 13, b John xvi, 33, c 2 Cor, v 4, d 1 Pet, i. 6, &c, e J hn xvii, 22, 24, 20,

be observed, that he considers all to be given him by the Father, who believe and all agreeable to the apostolical word. Such is the sure ground of Christian mutual union, and likewise with the Lord Jesus Christ himself, their head.

To as many (a) as received him, to them gave he power to become the fons of God, even to them that believe in his name. They are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, stly framed together, (b) groweth into an holy temple in the Lord.' Such have a clear certain interest in the will, or desire of their interceding Lord, who, because he continueth ever, (c) hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore, he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.'

'When he ascended up on high, (d) he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. This same Jesus, said the benevolent angels, (e) which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have feen him go into heaven. There, as the son, (f) he is consecrated high-priest for evermore. A high-priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty, (g) in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched, and not man. An high priest of good things to come; (b) there to appear in the presence of God for us. Neither by the blood

of goats, or of calves, but by his own blood, he

entered in once for all into the holy place, having

obtained eternal redemption for us. Whom the heaven

a John i, 12, b Fph, ii, 20, 21, c Heb. vii. 24, 25, d Bph, iv, 8, c.Assi, 11, f Heb, vii, 28. g chap, viii, 1, 2, h chap, ix, 11, 24, 13;

must receive, (a) until the times of restitution of all things: the times of refreshing, from the presence of the Lord.

Here the faints do rest together with him, till the folemn grand universal period of blifs, when God, even the Father ' shall bring with him all who did fall asleep in ' Jefus (b), to be glorified in them (c), and to be admired in all them that believe, in that day. Thus is our life? hid with Christ in God; (d) and when Christ, who is our · life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.' How pregnant with advantages is the priesthood of our divine Master? It is not lawful (e), or rather possible, for one to utter every thing; but to hear unspeakable words, and to fee objects which are no less unspeakable, are enough to make them glory, though, as was the cafe of St. Paul himself, ' it were in their infirmities.' What shall we say to ' the righteous shining forth as the fun, in the kingdom of their father! As thou, O Father, haft ' given him power over all flesh, (f) that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.' Here finishes the intercession, with that of the end of time, " when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; (g) when the fon also himself shall be subject " unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.'

Happy thoughts to those 'who must shortly put off 'their tabernacle, (h) for a building of God, (i) an house 'not made with hands, eternal in the heavens! They have an infinite original giver to expect from! An already perfected, and all-sufficient intercessor, by whom they are to re-

a Acts 21, 19. b 1 Theff iv., 14. c 2 Theff i. 10. d Col. iii. 3, 4. e 2 Cor xii 4. f John xvii 2. g 1 Cor. xv. 24.28. h.2 Pet. il 14. i 2 Cor. v. 14.

ceive! Verily, this is firong confolation! Like an anchor to the foul, (a) both fure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus. Salvation unto our God, (b) which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb. He loved the church, (c) and gave himself for it, that he might fanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish. Not only children, but heirs; (d) Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

Sweet and ever to be acknowledged blood of Christ, whence we are 'washed from our sins, (e) made kings and 'priests unto God and his Father! to him be glory and 'dominion for ever and ever! Oh, Lord,' let one and all of us say, (f) 'I am thy servant, I am thy servant; thou hast loosed my bands. I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows now unto the Lord, in the presence of all his people: in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord'. None else have a clear scripture right to gospel consolations. He that hath my commandments, (g) and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.' Amen.

CONTINUED.

THE Lord hath fworn, fays the royal prophet, (b) and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever

a Heb vi 18, &c. b Rev. vii 10. c Eph. v. 25, d Rom viii, 17. e Rev. i. 5.6. f Pfal exvi 16, &c. g John xiv. 41. h Pfal ex. 4.

to

th

or

5)

le

e

r

"after the order of Melchisedec.' Applied expressly by our divine Saviour to himself, (a) 'how then doth David, 'in,' or by 'the spirit, call him Lord?' An argument managed at large in the epistle to the Hebrews (b). 'Where- fore, holy brethren, (c) partakers of the heavenly calling, 'consider the apostle, and high priest of our profession, Je- fus Christ. One,' above every other, in this character, made known to mankind 'who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way. No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God. So also Christ glorised not himself to be made an high priest, but he that said unto him, thou art 'my son, to-day have I begotten thee.'

Such an high priest became us, (d) who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher
than the heavens. This man, because he continueth for
ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Neither is he an
high priest (e) which cannot be touched with the seeling:
of our infirmities; but was in all things tempted like as
we are, yet without sin. For in that he himself hath
fuffered, being tempted (f) he is able to succour them
that are tempted. Let us therefore come boldly to
the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and
find grace to help in time of need.

How agreeably adapted is all this to human impersection? Christ's obedient life, completed in that of his willing sacrifice upon the cross, did lay the solid soundation for the persect intercessory office. 'For if the blood of bulls, and of goats, and the ashes of an heiser, sprinkling the unclean, sandtifieth to the purifying of the slesh; (f) how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your

a Mat. xxii. 43. b chap. v, vi. vii. e chap iii. t. 4, 5. d chap. vii 26, 244. e chap iv, 15. f chap ii. 18. g chap. ix 130. 14.

conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

And for this cause, he is the mediator of the New Tes-

' tament,' or Covenant, ' that by means of death, for the

redemption of the transgressions that were under the first

· Testament, they which are called might receive the pro-

mife of the eternal inheritance."

Melchisedec was a real man and a king; having the sacred priestly office too conjoined (a). 'So he who shall build the temple of the Lord, (b) and shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne, shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.' This shall be to those, and those only, who are devoutly ruled by him. For such he abideth continually; (c) 'But this man,' different from all others who officiate upon earth, (d) 'after he had offered one sacrifice for ever, sat down on the right hand of God: from hencesorth expecting till his enemies be made his soothool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. He is made not after the law of a carnal commandment, (e) but after the power of an endless life.'

What an agreement between the Old and New Testament, in the nicest particulars of prediction and accomplishment! Consequently, of our blessed Lord's divine mission!

The spirit of prophecy,' (f) is the undoubted 'testimony of Jesus.' Whence, likewise it follows, 'that all scripture (g) is given by inspiration of God, and is prositable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly surnished unto all good works. How ought we to value the condescending love of Christ, in his priestly.

e chap. vii. 16 f.R.v, xix 10. g 2 Tim iii, 15, 16.

office! 'If any man fin, (a) we have an advocate with the Father.' And who can fay, (b) they have not finned! 'Christ is a propitiation for the fins of the whole penitent world.' Here despair and presumption are both set aside. It is God that justifieth, (c) who is he that condemneth! It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.'

SECTION IX.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

quittal, after being regularly tried. If one be found quilty and yet justified, this must be owing to grace, and not to right. Thus it is understood, by the royal prophet, (d) 'If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who 'could stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou 'mayest be feared.' Again, (e) 'enter not into judgement with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man 'living be justified (f).' Upon this is grounded what St. Paul says, (g) 'even as David also describeth the blessediness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness 'without works, saying, (b) Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.'

The law requires a perfect unsinning obedience, speaking in this way (i), 'that the man which doth those things shall 'live by them.' On the other hand (k), 'cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in

a I John il. I. b chap. i. 10. c Rom. viii. 33, 34. d Pfal. cxxx. 3 4. e Pfal. cxliii, 2. f compare Rom, iii 20. g Rom, iv. 6, &c. h Pfal xxxii, 1, 2, i Rom, x 5. k Gal. iii 10,

the book of the law to do them.' Who, then, of all the buman race can thus be judicially acquitted? None, for certain, because 'in many things we all offend (1); wherefore the law was our school-master (1), to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. God sending his own Son (u), in the likeness of sinful slesh,' did effectuate by a clear covenant of indemnity to all who are penitent; who walk not after the slesh, but after the spirit.' Thus is 'the righteousness of the law sulfilled,' as before God, to them that were weak.

'Therefore (w), being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Now, it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth (x)? Hereby the trembling soul, with terror, is listed up above despair. Well might the Angel say (y), fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. And on earth peace, good will towards men. Be it known unto you (z), that by this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Happy they who rely upon such truths, to make them the ground of a 'fincere future obedience. If the Son 'shall make you free (a), ye shall be free indeed.' Free, as said devout Zacharias (b), 'to serve God, without slavish fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. Having the knowledge of salvation, by the remission of sins, through the tender-mercy of our God; whereby the day spring from on high hath visited us, to

s Jam. iii 2, t Gal. iii, 14. u Rom. viii. 3. w chap. v. 1, 2. x chap. viii 33, 34, y Luke ii, 10, 14. z Acts xiii. 38, 39. z John viii. 36. b Imke i. 74.

give light to them that fit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. Men and brethren (c), ye know that a good while ago, God made choice among us apostles, that the Gentiles, by my mouth, (Peter's) should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us. And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

-

0

No principle whatever can be so powerful with the ingenuous. 'For therein is the righteousness of God revealed (d), from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall 'live by faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth (e) that Jesus is the Son of God? He that believeth, (f) and is baptized, shall be saved. Before faith came (g), we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. But after that faith is come, ye are all the children of God, who believe in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized, from sull conviction, 'have put on Christ. Ye are all one in him; all heirs according to the promise; ye are justified from strict legal penalties (b), in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of the Lord.' Here is peace, life, and perfect enjoyment.

SECTION X.

THE DANGER OF UNBELIEF.

OVE to truth is one of the most certain proofs of a good character. Whence it must follow (i), 'that he 'who believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of 'God,' having had evidences properly laid before him, 'is c Acts xv. 7, &c. d Rom i 17. e 1 John v 5. f Mark xvi. 16. g Gal. iii. 23, 26. 27, 28, 29. h 1 Cor. 6, xi. i John iii, 18.

condemned already: and this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and that such men love darkness rather than light, because their works are evil. A thought of terror, like that of taking part with God against themselves: for every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Again (k), 'I am come a light into the world, that 'whosoever believeth on me, should not abide in darkness.' And if any man hear my words and believe not,' so as to obey, 'I judge him not' for the present: 'yet hath he one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day.' He shall see, and own, and acquiesce in God's most righteous sentence against him from it. Such error, owing to the love of sin, is for most part gradually brought on. Pride of undershanding will affect to be wise beyond measure. They of this fort are fond to be applauded for what is boldly singular; or they swim with the current. 'How can ye believe (s) which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only.

Popular admiration, and love of novelty, lead both to the difbelief of what is momentous. 'Ye are they which justify 'yourselves before men (m), but God knoweth your hearts: 'for that which is highly esteemed among men is abo-'mination in the fight of God Some are self consident moralists, and others are equally felf consident devotees. The stream of the times carries each of them away.

Flesh'y lusts do yet more commonly 'war against the foul (n); at times, they take away the heart, that is, right understanding and will' altogether (o); what occupies attention most in this way will ever prejudice; and, in time, k Jo. xii, 40, &c. 1 chap. v, 44. m Lu. xvi, 15. n t Pet. ii, 11, Hos iv-11,

the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts; being wilfully ignorant. God scorneth the scorners (q), for how can they relish pure practical dostrine! Like the meanest of animals, they trample this precious pearl under their seet, (r) and turn again to rend. Take heed (s), brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

In effect, the language of such is (t), ' what have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time? And as he (Paul) (u) ' reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and a judgement to come, Felix trembled, and answered, faying, go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient feafon, I will call for thee. All things that are reproved, are ' made manifest by the light (v); wherefore be ye not unwife, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. He that turneth away his ear from the hearing of the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination x): true faith demands from babitual transgressors, that they hate their former felves, even to loathing. And when he (n) came to himfelf, he faid, how many hired fervants of my Father's have bread enough, and to fpare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise, and go to my Father, and will fay unto him, Father, I have finned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called the Son : make me as one of thy hired fervants. Behold what vehement desire (z), yea what zeal, yea what revenge is here.

And the publican (a), standing afar off, would not life

p 2 Pet iii, 3, 5. q Prov. iii, 74, r Matth, vii, 6, s Heb, iii, 12,
t Matth, viii, 29. u Acts xxiv. 25, v Eph, v, 13, 17,
x Prov, xxviii. 9. y the Prodigal, Luke xv, 17, &c, z 2 Cor, vii, 11,
a Luke xviii, 13,

'up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.' Such are the humbling abasements of genuine penitent saith; and no other can be justified. 'And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter; and Peter remembered the word of the Lord (b), and went out, and wept bitterly.' Careless credulous insidels, think little of all this. Like Pilate, they say in their 'spleen (c), what is truth?' But wait not for an answer. They even haste away from their best advisers. They prefer not spiritual health to their own immediate self pleasing. They would rather be soothed by a deceiving enemy. Blessed God, may we always act in reason!

SECTION XI.

A SUMMARY OF OUTWARD EVIDENCES FOR CHRIST WHILE ON EARTH.

SAYS St. John (d), 'and there are three that bear witness on earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: 'and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness 'of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which he hath testissed of his Son.' That of the spirit is allowed by all to signify his divine miraculous works; agreeable to Isa. xi. 2, &c. 'And the spirit of the 'Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of 'knowledge, and of the sear of the Lord. With righted ousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth:' that is, the humble and penitent:

'He whom God hath sent (e), speaketh the words of bluke xxiii, 61, 62, c John xviii, 38, d 1 Epist, v, 8, 9, e John iii, 34,

his

ch

nd

khe

·ſs

ey'

or

5.

te

g

God; for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him.
The Father, as follows, loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. Power over all nature, when he chose; so that even the dead (f) did hear his voice and live. Much more disease, tempests, and waves of the sea.

All these, being under command did serve to justify him (g). His doctrine, like fine water, was sweet and abundant. As foretold (b), 'Then will I fprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols I will cleanse you.' Thus explained, a new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and cause you to walk in my statutes; and 'ye shall keep my judgements, and do them.' Not unlike to that other prediction (i). For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty; and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour out my spirit upon thy seed, and my bleffing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. One shall say, I am the Lord, and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe, with his hand unto ' the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel.'

What a perfect system of rules and motives do we now posses? How natural was it for the multitude to ask (k), with astonishment, whence hath this man all this wisdom and these mighty works? Whence hath this man all these things; seeing his low origin, and relatives, we are not ignorant of? Some, as Philosophers, have done well; but Christ excelleth them all. 'He came to suffil the law and the Prophets (1).' In his doctrine and precepts there are no impersections; 'for it pleased the Father (m), that in him should all sulness dwell.' His authority reacheth to

f John v. 25. g r Tim. iii, 16. h Fz k xxxvi, 25, 26, 27, i 1sa, xliv, 3, 4, 5, k Matth, xiii, 54, 56. l chap, v, 17, m Col, i, 19,

the heart (n): 'and ye are complete in him (o', in the 'fpirit, and not in the letter 'p), whose praise is not of men, but of God. Christ loved the church, and gave himself 'for it (q), that he might fanctify and cleanse it, with the 'washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or 'any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.' Amazing testimony!

Connected with the above, clearly, is the bood or death of Christ, by which he was made perfett (r). He did throughout his whole ministry, what was proper to enlighten, fanctify, and fave mankind; but in his last sufferings, after a diftinguished manner. As a witness for divine truth, he was beroically falthful; an unequalled Martyr. 'So it became ' him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, (1) in bringing many Sons into glory. Before Pontius · Pilate (t), he witneffed a good confession.' How calm was he, from thenceforward, how mild, how forgiving, how devout, how great every way! Then both heaven and earth did take part with him. 'The veil of the temple was rent in twain (u), from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened, and many dead bodies of faints, which flept, arose, and came out of the graves, after his refurrection, and appeared unto many. And there was darkness over all the land, unto the ninth hour. At length, he faid (v), it is finished, and he bowed his head, and gave ' up the Ghoft.' Wonderful sufferer! See how 'the spirit the water, and the blood agree in one.'

n Matth, v. 21, &c, o Col, ii, 10, p Rom, ii, 29, q Eph v, 25, 26, 27. r Heb, v. 9, s Heb. ii, 10, t I Tim, vi. 13, u waith. xxvii. 51, 45. &c. Lv John xix. 30.

SECTION XII.

the

felf

the

it it

or

out

of

h-

ti-

if-

as

ne

S,

15

n

N

d

e

AN INWARD TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST.

*ITE that believeth (a) on the fon of God hath the witness in himself; is, by exceeding great and precious promises, (b) 'made partaker of a divine nature, 'having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Such have put off,' concerning the former conversation, (c) 'the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and are renewed in the spirit of their minds; and have put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.' They are one, to a certain degree, with him who is insinitely perfect.

They want neither sufficiency of strengt's nor direction; as the effects do witness. Though not complete, they are blessed, (d) 'because they do hunger and thirst after this.' Their path (e) 'is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' Their heaven is begun, and when they awake yet more fully after death, (f) they shall behold God's face in righteousness, and be satisfied with his likeness; being sealed (g) with the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.'

'Thus the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, (b)
that we are the children of God; and if children, then
heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.' Hence
peace of conscience doth arise, and a serene behaviour, even
under heaviness, by trial; 'if so be that we suffer with
Christ, that we may be also gloristed together. Not on-

a I John v, 10, b 2 Pet: i, 4, c Eph, iv, 21, &c, d Mat, v, 6, e Prov, 10, 18, f Pfal, xv ii, 15, g Eph, i, 13, 14, h Rom, viii, 16, 17, T 2

- · ly fo, (i) but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that-
- tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience;
- and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed;
- . because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by
- the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.'

Such are the fruits of a fure, clear justifying faith, 'even

- · peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By
- · whom also we have access by faith, into this grace where-
- in we stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.
- These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye
- ' might have peace (k). In the world ye shall have tribula-
- tion; but be of good-cheer, I have overcome the world.
- . The doctrine and spirit of Christ together will more than
- conquer (1). No creature shall be able to separate from
- 'fuch love. Not as the world giveth (m), give I unto
- ' you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be
- ' afraid. I give unto them eternal life, (n) and they shall
- never perish. My Father which gave them me is greater
- than all: and none shall pluck them out of my Father's
- " hand."

A believer's heart and his treasure lead to one place. This is a certain prime witness in themselves. 'The Holy

- . Ghost testifieth in every city, faying, (o) that bonds and
- afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me,
- ' neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might
- finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have
- received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the
- grace of God. I am ready, (p) not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus.'
- Magnanimous, indubitable faith! What a strength of in-

i Rom. v 3, 1, 1, m John xiv. 27. p chap. xxi. 13.

k John xvi. 13 n chap x 28, 29.

1 Rom viii. 37, 39. o Acts xx. 23, 24. wird witness! I am now ready to be offered (a), and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: · Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteoufe ness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day; and not to me only, but to all also who love his appearing.'

at-

e;

1:

y

n

Must not a gospe! replete with so great powers, be of divine original; and its author, the fon of God, likewise divine? How then shall we escape, if we neglect so great. falvation (b)? O house of Jacob, (c) come ye, let us walk in the light of the Lord. Arise, (d) shine, for thy blight is come, and the glory of the Lord is rifen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.' Amen.

CHAP. III.

CHRIST A KING.

SECTION I.

HE furest rule for interpreting Old Testament prophecies is by what is faid of them in the New. As when St. Peter fays, from Pfalm ii. (e) ' who by the mouth of thy fervant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together 2.2 Tim iv, 6, &c. b Heb ii. 3. c lfa, ii. 5, d chap. lx. 1, 3. e Afts iv. 25,

'against the Lord, and against his Christ:' applying the same, in what follows, to Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel. Of the same holy child Jesus, the royal prophet thus speaks, in the above Psalm: 'Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of 'Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee (a). 'Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine 'inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy 'possession.' Thus Christ, in comparison, is the only begotten: 'being made so much better than the angels (b), as 'he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.'

From Zion too, the evangelical law was to proceed; (c) · even the rod of divine strength, to rule in the midst of his enemies. Thy people,' it is added, ' shall be willing. in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness, by • the dew of gospel youth; as pearly draps are both numerous and fweet to look upon, 'from the womb of the " morning.' How exactly answerable to the word of Isaiah. the fon of Amos, concerning Judah and Jerusalem (d): And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the · hal; and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go, and fay, come ye, let us go up unto the · mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law,' even as David had foretold, ' and the word of the Lord from · Jerusalem.

2 Pfal, ii, 6, 7, &c. b Heb. i. 4 c Pfal. cx, 2. d chap, ii. 1, &c,

he

ith

oly

ve

of

n-

).

le

Y

t-

S

e

All who fincerely believe, in all ages, belong to this defcription. They are 'an holy and peculiar people (a), that 'they should shew forth the praises,' or virtues 'of him, 'who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous 'light.' When their professional and real characters do answer; then shall the other parts of Isaiah's prophecy be fulfilled: 'and they shall beat their swords into plough-'shares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation 'shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they 'learn war any more.

This exactly fulfils another prediction, (b) 'When thou 's shalt make his soul,' or life, 'an offering for sin, he shall 'see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his know- ledge shall my righteous servant justify many.' In the sense set forth from above, and by an angel of Got to the blessed Mary, (c) he shall be great, and shall be called the fon of the highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his sather David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob sor ever, and of his kingdom, there shall be no end. For he must reign (d) till he hath put all enemies under his seet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Then death and hell (e) are to be cast into the lake of sire.'

What august ideas are those of our b'essel Lord's kingdom! 'He shall drink of the brook in the way (f); therefore shall he list up his head, 'to reign. Whence Jesus himself says (g), 'ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? Thus it behoved him to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day: and that re-

a I Pet. il 9 4. b chap. liii. 10, 11. c I.uke i. 32, &c. d I. Cor, xv. 25, 26. c Rev. xx. 14. f Pfal, cx 7. g Luke xxiv. 26.

pentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.' For the time, by this means, shall come (c) 'when they shall not hurt nor destroy in all 'my holy mountain,' faith he of the branch that shall grow out of Jesse's roots, 'for the earth shall be full of the know-ledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. He shall 'not fail (d), nor be discouraged,' or broken, as in the margin, 'till he have set judgement in the earth: and the 'isles shall wait for his law.'

Christ, then, is invested with sole, spiritual, and infallible rule. 'For he is our peace (e', and through him we both, 'Jews and Gentiles, have an access by one spirit unto the 'Father.' Strictly and properly speaking, indeed, 'his, 'kingdom is not of this world (f),' but still, what leads to the sublimest granteur, is to learn of him. 'Every one that 'is of the truth,' said he before Pontius Pilate, 'heareth 'my voice.' Such, even in present rest, do reign and prosper (g); but still more shall they 'reign as Kings and 'Priests unto God hereaster (h). For the Kingdom of God 'is within men (i); by righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' Real permanent ornaments (k), 'which are in the sight of God of great price.' Such will reign in his presence, when all other empires cease.

How wise and glorious an establishment for the only begotten! 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the Scep-'tre of thy Kingdom is a right Sceptre. Thou lovest 'righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore God, 'thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, 'above thy fellows.' The contrivance and execution are equally amazing! Let Christ's Kingdom be understood as purged of every thing which has not his own warrant.

e Ifa. xi. 9, 1 d chap xlii. 4. e Eph. ii 13, 18. f John xviii. 36, 37. g Matth. xi. 29. h Rev. i. 6. i Rom. xiv. 17. k 4 Pct. iii 4.

nis

15.

all

WC

W-

Ill

ne:

le:

le:

7,

0

5.

0

1

1

Let us believe his word, according to the prime simplicity of it; (1) as to others, their state is deplorable. 'Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies (m), whereby the people fall under thee. Thou shall break them as with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel (n), when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him! But, when the great day of his wrath is come (o), who shall be able to stand?"

SECTION II.

CHRIST A PRINCELY SAVIOUR.

So then, after the Lord had spoken' to his Apostles in a body, and for the last time before his death upon earth (p), 'he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And he is the head of the body, the church (q); who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead: that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. Far above all principality r), and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come. Words of intesselfable import! Yet the hope of being one day able to comprehend is what every genuine follower of his may, and ought to pray for (s).

'The right hand of the majesty on high' denotes power and privilege better than those of 'angels (t); for are they not all 'ministering spirits, sent forth by him, to minister for them 'that shall be heirs of salvation? Such thoughts, unless they had been inspired, no heart of man had been able to con-

l 2 Cor. xi. 3, m Pfal. xlv. 5. n Pfal. ii. 9, 12. o Rev. vi. 17. p Mark xvi. 19. q Col. i, 18. r Eph. i, 21. s chap, iii. 18, t Heb. i, 4, 14.

ceive (v); they carry now their own evidence along with them. What a near and dear relation do believers stand in, to such illimited goodness! 'He that is joined to the Lord (u) is one spirit. And where the spirit of the Lord is (x), there is liberty. But we all with open sace, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory, to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.

Jefus is the true and only medium of dvine prefence. The glory of God and of the Lamb' is therefore conjoined (y). 'They are the temple of Jerusalem' there described. 'Things in earth (z), and things in heaven' too, are thus reconciled, or brought under one head. 'Ye are ' come to an innumerable company of angels (a), to the general affembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.' What a glorious, triumphant idea! How blissful a change by dying! (b) 'To fleep in Christ,' the true and only medium, likewife, of divine communications ! Here are all his promifes fulfilled, yea, and amn. Deliverance from trouble! Complete and endless enjoyment! God himself shall be with them, and be their God (c). And God shall wipe away 'all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither forrow, nor crying, neither shall there be 'any more pain: for the former things are passed away. 'These words, are true and faithful.

Of course, till then, Jesus is the true and only proper medium of divine worship. Through him, as already observed, we have an access by one spirit unto the Father (d); and

v i Cor. ii, 9. u i Cor. vi. 17. x 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. y Rev. xxi. 23. 2 Col i 10 a Heb. xii. 22. 23, b i Thef. iv 14. c Rev. xxi. 2, 3, 5. d Eph ii. 18, 11.

thereby grow into an holy temple, in the Lord. For there is one God (a), and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, 'to be testissed in due time. We have such an high Priest (b), who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Not into sigures and shadows of good things, as before; but into heaven itself, (c) now to appear in the presence of God for us.

ŀ

'If ye abide in me, (d) and my words abide in you, ye 'shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. We 'have not such an high Priest, as cannot be touched with 'our infirmities; (e) therefore, let us come boldly to the 'throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find 'grace to help in time of need. And whatsoever ye do in 'word or deed, (f) do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, 'giving thanks to God, and the Father by him.' How signally useful and sweet are the above purely and peculiarly evangelical dostrine? They consist, at the same time, with every sound principle of reason. They are equal, under God, to preponderate our heaviest present trials. That so many illiterate men, distant the whole or most of them, in time and place, should write with consistence, but by one supernatural spirit, is not easy to imagine.

Let us, therefore exceedingly fear and quake, to do 'de'fpite unto the spirit of grace. (g) It is a fearful thing,'
under guilt so complicated, 'to fall into the hands of the
'living God:' In effect, (h) 'to make him a liar. Yet
'faith, if it hath not works, (i) is dead, being alone. Add

^{2 1} Tim. ii, 5, b Heb. viii, 1, 2, c chap, ix, 24, d John xv, 7, e Heb. iv, 15, 16, f Col, iii, 17, g Heb, x, 29 31, h 1 John ii, 10, i Jam, ii, 17,

- to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to
- knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience;
- and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly-
- kindness; and to brotherly-kindness, charity; for if these
- things be in you, and abound, they make you, that ye
- 'Thall neither be barren, nor unfruitful in the knowledge
- of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ye shall never fall, for so an
- entrance shall be ministred unto you abundantly into the-
- everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus
- · Christ.'

SECTION III.

REDEMPTION BY CHRIST.

flood as done. Thus Zacharias, the father of John Baptist, (b) 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for 'he hath visited and redeemed his people. And hath 'raised up an horn of salvation for us, in the house of his 'servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy 'prophets, since the world began.' Now the clear immediate forerunning signs had commenced; and the entire accomplishment would be no less sure. All opposition whatever would be frustrated. The enemies, as follows, so to speak, are overcome. The mercy promised hath taken place. The holy covenant is established. Holiness and righteousness, from thence, prevent, agreeable to the divine oath.

Christ Jesus is our strong spiritual salvation; whereof the deliverance of Israel from Egypt was but a mere shadow. Made of the seed of David, (c) according to the slesh; and declared to be the son of God with power, according

b Luke i, 68, &c, c Rom, i, 3, &c,

to the spirit of holiness, by the refurrection from the dead.

The people were assonished at his doctrine, (a) because he

taught them as one having authority, and not as the

'scribes.' So, when St. Peter preached in his name, as

exalted to the right hand of the majesty, they that glad-

'ly received his word were baptized: and the fame day

there were added to them three thousand fouls.'

The redemption by our bleffed Lord is no less royal than strong. Hence, it is expressed by the emblem of a horn, (b) alluding to Daniel (c). 'He who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, (d) hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father.' Such do fight with and conquer, not 'sless and blood only, but principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world (e), spiritual wickedness in high places. Yea, we are more than conquerors (f), through him that loved us' Such are full massers of themselves; 'slow to anger, (g) better than the mighty.' No other rule upon earth is comparable to this. In heaven, therefore, 'they stand before the throne, and before the lamb, (b) clothed with white robes and palms in their hands.'

Blessed are they (i) which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. They shall grow up in all things into him which is the head, (k) even Christ. To-day a babe, soon after a youth; and anon, a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. How great, how royal a state is this! They are new creatures, (l) having crucified the sless, with the affections and lusts, (m) they live in the spirit, they walk in the spirit. They have learned in whatsoever

a Mat. vii, 28, 29 b Luke i. 69. c chap viii 20, &c. d Rev. i. c. 6. e Eph. vi 12 f Rom. viii 37, g Prov. xvi. 32 h Rev. vii. 9. i Mat, v. 6. k Eph iv. 15, 13, l Gal, vi, 1. m chap. v. 24, 25.

thate il ey are (m) therewith to be content. They know

both how to be abased and how to abound; every

" where and in all things they are instructed, both to be full

'and to be hungry; both to abound, and to fuffer need.

'They can do all things through Christ which strengthen-

eth them. It is enough that he shall be magnified in

their body, (n) whether by life or by death.

'If the Son therefore shall make you free (0), then shall 'ye be free indeed. To live shall be Christ (p), and to die 'gain. Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be 'able to separate us (q) from the love of God, which is in 'Christ Jesus our Lord. A spirit of power verily (r), and of love, and of a sound mind.' Pure royal adoption (r.! The abolishment of savish sear. To complete all, the redemption is everlasting; for, 'if children, heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. These things have I spoken unto you (1), that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.'

SECTION IV.

-4-4 4-4-4-4-4-4

DEATH DISARMED BY CHRIST.

BESIDES subduing us to himself; ruling his people by wise and equitable laws; desending them from dangerous attacks; restraining and conquering all his own and their spiritual enemies; he, in effect, doth abolish the last of these, by 'bringing life and immortality to light (u). To him, this grand discovery is chiefly owing. Christ, the

m bhil iv, et, n bhil, i, 20, o John viii, 36, p Phil, i, 21, q Rom, viii, 38, 39, r 2 Tim, i, 7. s Rom, viii, 35, 17, t John xv, et, u 2 Tim, i, 10,

first fruits (v), afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming: or rather, at his appearance within the veil (x). The obstacle to this, arising from guilt, he removes, in the case of true penitence. Whence that noble, just, triumph, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory,

through our Lord Jefus Chrift.'

W

Fy

ıll

d.

11-

in

17

11

ie

li-

e,

De

in

id !

2-

75

I

u,

d

e

39,

Behold in him a ' fure deliverer. God was in Christ (y), reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their repented of trespasses unto them. By whom also we have access through faith (z), to that grace wherein we now, fland, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. He is our forerunner (a); and where he is, there shall we be * also (b); which hope we have as an anchor to the foul, both fure and fleadfast (c). I am the resurrection and the life, (d) ' he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet fhall he live : and whosoever liveth and believeth shall ne-' ver die.' Transporting thought! Not die, but be changed, even as those who remain, being alive upon earth, at the taft day; in a 'moment, in the twinkling of an eye (e), absent from the body (f), and present with the Lord.' In place of 'a dissolved tabernacle, having a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. So clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. I thank God (g), through Jesus Christ our Lord. Because I live (b), ye shall live also.

God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet finners, Christ died for us (i): Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be faved from

v t Cor, xv, 23, x Heb, vi, 16, 55, y 2 Cor, v, 19, z Rom, v, 2, 2 Heb vi, 20, b John xiv 3, e Heb, vi, 19, d chap, xi, 25, e 1 Cor, xv, 52. f 2 Cor, v, 8, 1, 4, g Rom, vii, 25, h John xiv, 19, i Rom, v, 8, &c,

wrath through him. For if when we were enemies, we

were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much

more being reconciled, we shall be faved by his life. Yes;

they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of.

righteousneis, shall reign in life, by one, Jesus Christ, even

' life eternal. Behold what manner of love the Father hath-

bestowed upon us (k! If by one man's disobedience,

'many were made,' treated as 'finners (1); fo by the obedience of one, shall many be made,' treated as 'righteous.

' He is head over all things to the church (m), which is his

body; the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

. This is the covenant that I will make with the house of

' Israel after those days (n), faith the Lord; I will put my

' laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts : and

' I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

' I will be merciful to their unrighteonfness; and their fins

' and their iniquities will I remember no more ! He is not

' ashamed to be called their God (a), for he hath prepared

for them a city. So then all things are yours (p); Life,

death, things present, or things to come; all are yours:

and ye are Christ's, and Christis God's. How full of

grace and truth (q)' are these declarations ! Thanks be

" unto God for his unspeakable gift (r)!"

Being made free from fin, and become the fervants of

God (1), ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end

everlasting life. For the wages of fin is death; but the

' gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

It is no longer conjecture, or matter of faint argument; but light as noon day itself. 'Forasmuch as the children (t)

· are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise

k 1 John iii, r, 1 Rom, v, 19, m Eph, i, 22, 21, n Heb, viii, 10, 12, o chap, xi 16, p 1 Cor, iii, 21, &c. q John i, 14, r 2 Cor, ix, 5, s Rom, vi, 22 23. t Heb, ii, 4, 15.

took part of the fame, that through death he might deftroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil: and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage. Being born again, not of corruptible feed (x, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. It is indeed, the record y), that God hath given unto us eternal life: and this life is in, or by his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life. Bleffed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the refurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (z); to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.' How aftonishing! How confistent! How beneficial! And that made known by naturally ignorant unlearned men.

SECTION V.

HONOUR DUE TO CHRIST.

I have fet my King, says David, by the spirit, (a), upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. The Father loveth the Son (b), and sheweth him all things that himself doth. As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son; that all men should honour the Son, even as

x I Pet, i, 23, &c. y I John v, II, z I Pet, iii, 4. a Pfal, ii, 6, 7, b John v, 23, &c.

they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son,

· honoureth not the Father which hath fent him.' Justicial authority imports in it every other fovereign act. ' Being

found in fashion as a man (c), he humbled himself, and

became obedient unto death even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given

him a name above every name, that at, or rather in, the

name of Jesus every knee should bow; and that every

tongue should confess, that Jefus Christ is Lord, to the

' glory of God, the Father.'

How grand, and worshipful, are these accounts of celestial economy! Even while on earth, 'the dead did hear the voice of the Son of God and live (d); all specimens of what he would do more extensively, 'when the good shall come forth, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, to the refurrection of damnation.' Such judicial power, or authority, has a clear claim to be honoured, for the 'glory of him who hath put all things under him (e); 'it being manifest, that himself is excepted' that did so. We must all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ. (f) that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether good or 'bad.' An awful, yet sweetly affecting thought, to pious benevolence! 'In as much as ye have done it (g), unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. ' If any man ferve me, let him follow me (h), and where I 'am, there shall also my servant be : if any man serve me, 'him will my Father honour.' On the other hand, how dreadful, and just, that voice (i), 'Depart from mé, ye curfed,' cruelly withholding from my brethren, 'into ever-· lasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.'

c Phil, ii, 8, &c. d John v. 25, 29, et Cor xv. 27, f 2 Cor, v, 10, g Matth. xxv. 40, h John xii, 26, i Matth, xxv, 41,

Worshipful obedient honour is certainly due to authority so high. To neglect, and much more to disregard this, is not to honour the Father which hath sent him.' And what have such to expect? 'A fearful looking for of judgement, and siery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries (k); everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord (l), and from the glory of his power. He that hateth me (m) hateth my Father also.' Hence the wrath of him that sitteth on the throne and the wrath of the Lamb (n), are conjoined. 'And when the great day of his wrath is come, who shall be able to stand?' Rocks, dens, and burning mountains, would then be eligible. 'Fall on us, and hide us,' if it be possible!

Jesus is the Mediator of a boly, as well as a sorgiving covenant. He invites the 'weary and heavy laden to come 'unto him (o), to take his yoke upon them, to learn of him.' This is true respect; and leads to rest. But, 'with-out holiness (p), no man can see the Lord. He that committeth sin (q), is of the Devil; for the Devil sameth from the beginning: for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin' wilfully, and far less with 'continuance; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doth not righteousness, is not of God; 'neither he that loveth not his brother.'

k Heb, x, 27, l 2 Thef, i, 9, m John xv, 23, n Rev, vi, 16, 17, o Matth, xi, 28, 29, p Heb, xii, 14, q 1 John iii, 8, 9,

OF THE HOLY GHOST.

e end at and a signment property per

SECT 1.

HOW AND IN WHOM THE SPIRIT DOTH OPERATE

N some, for wife reasons, the Ho'y Ghost acts after a manner altogether supernatural. As in the case of 'vener-'able Simon (p), the same man was just and devout, waiting for the confolation of Ifrael; and the Holy Ghoft was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him 'up in his arms, and bleffed God, and faid, Lord, now · lettest thou thy fervant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have feen thy falvation,' and fo forth. Anna, a Prophetel's likewise, coming in that instant, gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of him to all that looked · for redemption in Ifrael. When both came by spirit into the temple, the facred impulse' might be unknown to them; but not what led to their subsequent testimonies.

One certain conclusion may be formed from the above, that a character of scrupulous justice, and out of a pious principle, is a place of favourite residence for the divine spirit. Truly God is good to Israel (q, even to such as are of a clean heart. He is a sun and shield to the upright (r), will give grace and glory, no good thing will he withhold from

p Luke ii, 25, 38, &c. q Pfal, lxxiii. I. r Ixxiv. 11,

them. He will guide them by his counsel (s); he will dwell in them (t), and walk in them; and will be their

God, and they shall be his people. This is the generation

of them that feek thee,' with acceptance (u), that feek

thy face, O God of Jacob. If ye, being evil, know how to

give good gifts unto your children (v); how much more

' shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them

that afk him.'

Such honour belongs to all without exception that are just and devout. 'They are born of God, and know God (w); God dwelleth in them, and his love is perfected in them. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit.' These gifts, then, might in part have been miraculous; but unless real graces from conversation had attended them, they could not, as above, have 'dwelt in God, and God in them.' Witness what our bleffed Lord hath faid x), ' many will fay unto me, in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophefied in thy name? And in thy name cast out Devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work 'iniquity' The point, therefore, is established, that fuch honour of an indwelling divine spirit, belongs only to the just and devout.

These grow into an holy temple in the Lord (y); and are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit. A spiritual house (z), an holy Priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Hereby know we the spirit of truth (a). The free heaven-

'ly spirit of adoption (b), whereby we cry, abba, Father.
'As led by the spirit, they are the Sons of God.' This,

s Pfal lxxiii. 24. t 2 Cor. vi. 16. u Pfal. xxiv. 6. v Luke xi. 13. w 1 John. iv. 7, 12, 13. Matth. vii 22. &c. y Eph. ii. 21, 22. z 1 Pet. ii. 5. a 1 John iv. 6. b Rom, viii. 15, 14, and their own spirit, or habit of mind and behaviour, doth demonstrate the same. Happy they, who have such an evidence! Jesus, literally in one's arms, is not equal to it; and it is the privilege of all genuine Discipes. Of his sulness, they do all receive grace for grace. How gloriously they have, in the fruits of the spirit! And how sit are they to die.

SECTION II.

DIVINE AGENCY CAN ONLY BE KNOWN FROM ITS EFFECTS.

MARVEL not that I said unto thee (a), are the words of Jesus to Nicodemus, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, thus personifying what is inanimate, the better to be understood, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit. In general, the meaning is, that wherever there have been habits of vice, these must be changed into the opposite good, by renewing grace; else there can be no true enjoyment. That which is born of the sless, that which is born of the sless, that which is born of the spirit, is spirit; high, elevating and divine. No human eye, however, can perceive the manner of such operation; no human thought neither can apprehend it.

All we have in our power is to look after visible effects produced. So is the kingdom of God, or pure gospel influence (b), as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For

a John iii, 7, 8, 5. b Mark iv 26, &c.

the earth, to appearance, bringeth forth fruit of herfelf, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth to a ripe or mature state, 'immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.'

Both images may be thus illustrated. Man, as a free agent, muft co-operate in pursuit of true bolinefe; as St. Paul enjoins (e), week out your own falvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleafure.' Each of these tranfcend our present understanding, as to method of union. But why may not the Supreme Being thus conferve, as well as produce? The simple undoubted fact is (f), every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh from the Father of lights; with whom is no variableness, or shadow of turning. In particular, of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that wefhould be a kind of first fruits of his creatures? The word made use of, and the spirit must conjoin. So, where no revelation is, except that of nature, ' men were to feek the Lord (g), if haply they might feel after him, and find him; though he be not far from every one of us: for, in him, as follows, we live, and move, and have our being.' The Creator and his offspring were here, also, to co operate.

Watch and pray (b), that ye enter not into temptation:
the spirit indeed is willing, but the slesh is weak. Man must do as he is able; and having done all, to 'commit the keeping of his soul to him that judgeth righteously' Thus he will be found, and in no way of sothful presumptuous trust. As sure as effects do prove the influence of wind unleen, so do spiritual improvements demonstrate the working power

e Phil. il. 12, 13. f Jam. i. 17. g Acts xvii. 27. h Matth. xxvi. 41,

of an unseen spirit. I am the vine (i), and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. However, to evince the mean of such fruitfulness, he adds, now ye are clean, through the word which I have spoken unto you. He that abideth in me, by faith and frequent holy meditation, and I in him by promised exercise of powerful love, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without, or severed from me, ye can do nothing. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask that ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

CONTINUED.

HE spirit of God acts not arbitrarily; but is ever under certain direction, according to the orders and promifes of his word. . What feems chance to us, is by no means fo, 'He maketh the clouds' themselves (k), however swift and jarring to appearance 'his chariots, and walketh,' like one serene, upon the wings of the wind. Are not two sparrows fold for a farthing (1)? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear ye 'nct, therefore,' it justly follows, 'ye are of more value than many sparrows.' So God will have all men to be faved (m), and to come to the knowledge of the truth. If they will not, they are left without excuse. They, and they only are to be charged with their own ruin. As St. Jude fays, ' they are twice dead; and to be plucked up by " the roots."

Clear signs, or fruits of a regenerated soul, are thus set forth (n): love to God, to Christ, to the saints, and all man-

i John xv. 1. 2. 3, 5. 7. k Pfal, civ, 3, l Matth, x 29, 30. m 1 I im. ii, 4, 13, n Gal, v. 22. 23.

kind. Where infinite excellence and goodness are, there wise affection doth operate, as in its highest, purest element. For like reason, will this also estimate him who is the 'bright'ness of his glory, (a) and the express image of his person.
'O my soul' too, they will say with the royal prophet, (b)
'thou art my Lord: my goodness extendeth not unto
'thee; but to the saints, that are on the earth; to the ex-

cellent, in whom is all my delight.'

is

ot

h

s,

n

f

r

From the above cometh joy in habit, though not in meafure always precifely the fame. They who 'partake of the 'divine nature, (c) must have a portion of the divine beatitude. Such a portion as will lead, in the end, to a perfect interminable state. 'Blessed are they which do hunger 'and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled (d). 'They press hard toward the prize (e) of the high cal-'ling of God, in Christ Jesus. To behold God's face in 'righteousness, (f) and to be satisfied with his likeness.' This is pure joy, and in the Holy Ghost (g).

They do not separate, more than peace, which next follows: And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding of those who have not the spirit, 's shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Have salt in your-felves, (b) and peace one with another. Blessed are the peace-makers, (i) for they shall be called the children of God. Where envying and strife is, (k) there is consisting, and every evil work. And the fruit of righteous-session in peace of them that love peace,'

True love, or charity, again, is long-suffering, even to kindness (1); the causelessly injurious themselves, it doth not give

a Heb. i. 3. b Pfal. xvi. 3. 3 c 2 Pet. i. 4. d Mat. v. 6. e Phil. iii 14. f Pfal. xvii 15. g Rom, xiv 17. h Mark ix 50. i Mat. v. 9. k James iii. 16 18. I c Cor. xiii 4,

up with all at once; but is 'fwift to hear' in defence, 'flow to speak, (a) flow to wrath;' believing, 'that the 'wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.' The spirit of God beareth long before it withdraws, and so do all who are animated by it The gentle, as next follows, 'are easy to be entreated (b); they are 'not overcome of evil (c', but overcome evil with good. Not even in just anger, do they either speak or act unadvisedly. They are not like people drunk with sury; 'but 'filled with the spirit (d). They bear all things,' as much as possible, (e) 'believe all things' of conciliating nature, 'hope all things, endure all things. If any man thus offend not, (f) the same is a perfect man, and able also to 'bridle the whole body.'

Goodness to real want is another glorious inseparable fruit of the divine spirit; and that, like the sountain of both love and happiness, to the 'evil and unthankful; the just, 'and the unjust (g). He is gracious, (b) and sull of compassion, and righteous. He sheweth favour, and lendeth. He will guide his affairs,' at the same time, with discretion; that he may be the more enabled 'to disperse, to give to the poor,' and to continue his righteous or merciful acts for ever.

Faith, as a fingle grace, denotes fidelity; and must flow from a divine spirit. Exhort servants to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; (i) not answering again, not pursoining, but shewing all good sidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things. Thus doth the grace of God teach, that bringeth salvation. As every man hath re-

a James i. 19, 20 b James ii, 17. c Rom. xii. 11. d Eph v, 18, e i Cor, xiii, 7. f James iii, 2, g Mat, v, 45, h Pfal, exii, 4, &c, i Tit, ii, 9, 11, &c,

ceived the gift, (a) even fo minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Meekness is fond to heap diffolving benefits upon the very worst; 'with all lowliness, long-suffering, and forbearing in love (b). Endeavouring to keep the unity of the ' spirit in the bond of peace.' Such was that of Christ. Father, forgive them, (c) for they know not what they · do.

CONTINUED.

O live temperately, or foberly, (d) is effential to both justice and godliness. 'Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? (e) God forbid. But he that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit. Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; (f) but be filled with the spirit: speaking to vourselves in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual songs, finging and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers (g), Blessed are the pure in heart, (h) for they shall see God. The spirit of God dwelleth in such : (i) If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the ' temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.'

How important is the question then, 'am I, or am I onot born of the spirit? They that are after the flesh, (k) do mind, or rather are chiefly wife for the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, do mind, or are chiefly wife for 'the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded

a 1 Pet, iv, 10, b Eph. iv. 2 3, 4, c Luke xxiii 34, d Tit, ii, 11. e 1 Cor vi 15, 17. f Eph. v. 18. g 2 Cor, vi 14, h Mat. v. 8, i 1 Cor, iii. 16, 17 k Rom. viii. 5, &c.

is life and peace. And ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you:
Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' There may be degrees in each of the above spiritual sruits; but prevalence is that which ever must determine. 'Grow in grace (n).'

As already said, the doctrine of Christ's word is the prime instrumental mean; and therefore, added to the last exhortation, is, 'grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.' Again, (b) 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and Hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And take the sword of the spirit, (c) which is the word of God. Sanctify them through thy truth, (d) thy word is truth. Being born again, (e) not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever. And this is the word, which by the gospel is preached unto you.'

One chief branch of the renovating word is what concerns the death of Christ. 'For as Moses listed up the servent in the wilderness, (f) even so must the son of man be listed up: that whosever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. I am the living bread (g), which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, that is, think seriously, and so as to digest that doctrine, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give, is my slesh, which I will give for the life of the world. It is the spirit of these words 'that quickeneth; the slesh,' or literal sense of them, 'prositeth nothing:

^{2 2} Pet. iii. 18. b Col. iii, 16, c Eph. vi, 17. d John xvii, 17. e 1 Pet. i. 23, 25. f John iii, 14, 15. g chap. vi. 51, 63.

the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and life.

He was made sin,' (a) or treated as infamous, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.' How affecting from his own mouth! (b) 'Are ye come out as 'against a thief, with swords and staves, for to take me?' Thus he was made sin. And yet more, by what he endured 'upon the cross; as it is written, (c) 'cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.' To be bound as a thief, arraigned, condemned, mocked, spit upon, crucified, and all for us! What grateful heart will not be led to say, (d) 'I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not 'I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live 'in the slesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who 'loved me, and gave himself for me.'

Truly, the 'love of Christ is constraining, (e) because 'we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all 'dead: and that he died for all, that they which live, 'should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him 'which died for them, and rose again. And the spirit, 'and the bride,' or church, 'say come; (f) and let him that is a thirst come: and whosoever will, let him take 'the water of life freely.' In the above, is our whole practical system abridged; even that of the spirit. 'The 'spirit itself (g) beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God. And if children, heirs, heirs, 'of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.'

a. 2 Cor. v. 2t. b Mat xxvi 55. - c Gal. iii. 13, d chap. ii, 20, . e. 4 Cor. v, 14, 15, f Rev, xxii, 17, g Rom, viii, 10, 17,

CONTINUED.

ized by the great; 'but search the scriptures, (a) for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Christ. He that believeth on the son of God, (b) hath the witness in himself: but he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he besieveth not the record that God gave of his son.' A record clear and rejoicing, even as the lustre of heaven. Against such (c) there is no law.' No condemning sentence to be feared 'If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. And they that are Christ's, have crustissed the stell, with the affections and lusts. Let every man prove his own work, (d) and then shall he have respicions in himself, and not in another.'

*Christ, as a son, is faithful over his own house,' (e) both able and affectionate. 'Whose house are we, if we hold fast the considence, and the rejoicing of hope sirm unto the end. Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, (f) because he hath given us of his spirit. That is, love, joy, peace, (g) long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.' One who has the spirit, cannot oppose these, with his knowledge, more than he can deny himself. 'And hereby we know that we are of the truth, (b) and shall assure our hearts before him. For, if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we considence towards God.' Let not the doctrine of regeneration speak to any one in vain.

² John v, 19. b 1 John v. 10. c Gal. v. 23, 24, 24. d chap. vi. 4, eHeb. iii. 6, f 1 John iv, 13. g Gal. v, 22, 23, h 1 John iil, 19 &c.

It was taught under the O'd Toftament; but the New is, in some fort, denominated from it: written not with ink, (a) 'but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of thone, but in sleshy tables of the heart.' Whence the evangelical prophet, (b) 'I will pour water upon him that is 'thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground:' thus explained there, 'I will pour my spirit upon thy seed; and my bless'ing upon thine offspring.' Compare Jer. xxxi, 33, 34Pfal. cx. 3.

SECTION III.

HE IS THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH and LEADS TO IT.

THE aposses themselves were not instructed all at once, but as they were able to bear it. 'I have yet many things to say unto you, (c) 'but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the spirit of truth, is 'come, he will guide you unto all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you' This was eminently sulfilled, by his miraculous descent upon them at Pentecost (d). From thence forward, the change was amazing.

Similar effects, though not equally miraculous, will the coleftial spirit ever produce. What gifts he then believed are to meet with his bleffing; 'for the perfecting of the faints, (e) for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a

a 2 Cor. ili. 3, b chap. xliv. 3. c John xvi. 12, 13, 15, d Acts ii, 1, &c. e Eph, iv. 12, &c,

perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fuliness of Christ. That we may grow up into him in allithings which is the head, even Christ.' That truth is of greatest moment, which makes people good; like to their Lord: and should be plainly set forth, affectionately heard.

'him, and he will shew them his covenant. Hearken, my beloved brethren, (b) hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him?' If some things in St. Paul's writings are hard to be understood, as his affectionate brother Peter has fairly owned, (c) yet they are only dangerous to those who are previously disposed to wrest them. The illiterate, if they are ingenuous, will, in time, become more knowing. At all events, they can never perish, 'from lack of knowledge; because they do not reject' either this, or any another clearly prescribed means (d): the humble, modest, teachable meek, (e) 'God will guide into judgement; the meek he will teach his ways.'

The 'holy spirit of discipline doth only slee from deceit; and refuse to dwell, where unrighteousness cometh in." Great is the power of grace to overcome unsollicited dissipulties. If any of you lack wisdom (f), let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it 'shall be given him.' The willing open mind to truth is all that he requires. Only be not unstable, 'but ask in faith, or ask as a Christian, nothing wavering. Search the scriptures daily (g),' and trust assuredly to him, who is a 'sure and shield (b). Thou most upright (i; dost weigh the path of the just. He will teach us of his ways (k), and

a Pfal xxv, 14. b Jam. ii, 5, c 2 Pet. iii. i6 d Hof. iv, 6,...
e Pfal xxv. 9. f Jam. i. 5, 6. g Acis xvii, 11. h Pfal lxxxiv. 11.
i lfa. xxvi, 7. k chap. ii, 3.

we shall walk in them. Let the brother of low degree rejoice, in that he is exalted. For to the poor (f) the gospel is preached. Babes themselves may 'learn (g)'s for all shall know me (h), from the least to the greatest. Thus runs the divine covenant.

No wonder we rejoice in spirit, after the example of Jefus (i); even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, (k) ' hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face, or person of Iefus Christ. Wherefore, laying aside all malice (1), and 'all guile, and hypocrifies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new-born babes, defire the fincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. Quench not the spirit. (m) Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things: hold fast that which is good. If any man will do his will (n), he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.' The same way, as to every other article of belief which is effential. 'For, if the Son ' shall make you free (o), then shall ye be free indeed. No more children, toffed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine (p), by the fleight of men, and cun-' ning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.'

• Brethren, be not children in understanding (q). Howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.
At once hear and 'speak the truth in love; so shall not the
God of this world be able to blind (r): incline your ear,
and come unto me (s), hear and your soul shall live; and
I will make an everlasting covenant with you; even the
fure mercies of David. Behold, as follows, I have given

f Luke vii 22 g Matth. xi. 25. h Heb. viii, 11. i Luke x. 25, k 2 Cor. iv. 6 l 1 ret ii. 1, &c, m 1 hef. v. 19, n John vii, 17, o chap, viii, 36, p Eph, iv, 14. q 1 Cor, xiv, 20. r 2 Cor, iv 4. r 16a, lv, 3,

him for a witness to the people for a leader, and commander to the people.' And of himself that infallible
leader says (i), he that followeth me, shall not walk in
darkness, but shall have the light of life.' Truth, therefore, is the native issue of genuine affect on towards it. Even
the most simple forms thereof, and simply told, enter deep.
The true praise of instruction, is a good life; for by works,
faith is made perfect (k).'

They know little, how much soever they may pretend, who have no practical experience. It is to them, a dead letter; whereas, 'if ye know these things 'l), happy are ye, if ye 'do them. He that saith (m) he abideth in him, ought him'self also so to walk, even as he also walked.' How can an indevout man be said to pray as becometh? Or an uncharitable man, to give regular alms? Will one that is meek refuse to sorgive injuries? Or a bumble quiet man, live in constant rancour? Every right act doth naturally either produce, or improve another. The residue of the spirit is to be found every where. 'Let no man glory in men (n), for all things 'are yours.'

SECTION IV.

PUBLIC SIGNS THAT THE SPIRIT IS GENERAL-LY SOUGHT AFTER AND FOUND.

HEN people are thus renewed, from the joy they feel in falvation from the power of their past sins, and their grateful sense of the divine favour; they are led to say, with the 'royal Prophet (0), then will we teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto to thee. They consider one another (p), to provoke unto

i John viii. 12, k Jam, ii, 22, l John xiii, 17, m 1 John ii, 6, n 1 Cor, iii, 21, o Pfal, li, 13, p Heb, x, 24,

· love, and to good works. Not forfaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another. Then they that feared the Lord (p) spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

Speaking ' of the spirit poured from on high (q),' it is faid, 'the wilderness shall be a fruitful field,' fignifying fome notable change among the ignorant, and ' the fruitful field itself shall be counted, for yet more valuable increase. as a forest. 'Then judgement shall dwell in the wildernels, and righteousnels remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever. 4 And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation and ' in fure dwellings, and in quiet refting-places.' Hence, it must follow, that without peace and boliness, there can be no fellowship with God; no true spiritual fight of him (r): for 'God hath not given us the spirit of fear (s); but of power, and of love, and of a found mind. The wisdom that is from above (t), is first pure, then peaceable; and the fruit of righteousness is fown in peace of them that · love peace: the fruit of the spirit is peace (u).

Messiah's days are foretold in the following terms (v), thus saith God the Lord, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; I the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of

p Matth, iii, 16, &c, q lfa xxxii, 15, &c. r Heb, xii, 14, s 2 Tim, i, 7, t Jam, iii, 17, 18, u Gal, v, 22, v lfa, xlii, 5, &c,

the prison-house.' All owing to the 'spirit of the Lord' God upon him and them; compare chap. lxi. 1. And many people shall go and say, come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob (w), and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: and he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people,' on account of their bypast ferocity: 'and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.'

In that day,' fays the prophet Zechariah, (x) 'I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son; and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.' Where, then, there is a remarkable deficience of supplications, all kinds and measures of them, from that which is public, and samily, to that which is secret, there the spirit of grace is not savingly felt. Likewise, wherever it is too common to abstract the mind from being samiliar with him whom our iniquities have pierced: or even indifferent to what pious affectionate believers do feel in being vexed from day to day with the ungodly conversation of the wicked (y).'

A land of this fort, must be a land of guilt; in awful danger of being eaten up, (z) or broken down: where furious vices, like briers and thorns, do spring up tast; and of which it is said, spiritually to be understood, 'I will also

w Ifa, il, 3, &c, x chap, xii, 10, y 2 Pet, il. 78. z Ifa,ii, 5,&c.

command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it.'
Tremendous state. 'Wo unto them that are wise in their
own eyes, and prudent in their own sight; that rise up
early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink;
that continue until night, till wine instame them; and the
harp and the viol, and the tabret, and the pipe and the
wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of
the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands.'
Therefore hell,' or the grave, 'hath enlarged herself, and
opened her mouth without measure: and their glory,
and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.'

Worfe still, 'the kingdom of God (a) shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. My spirit shall not always strive with man; (b) Behold the days come, faith the Lord God, (c) that I will fend a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to · feek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst. Grieve not the holy spirit of God; (d) but stir up the ' gift which is in thee (e). Turn ye at my reproof; (f) behold I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. I will pour my spirit upon thy feed, (g) and my bleffing upon thine offspring: and they · shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. One shall fay, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob: and an-

tiga peda A. ac

1

15

f

a Mat. xxi. 43. b Gen vi 3. c Amos viil tr, &c d Eph. lv 3d. e 2 Pim. i. 6. f Prov, i. 23. g 1fa xliv, 3, &c.

other shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and furname himself by the name of Israel.

SECTION V.

SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.

WHAT our bleffed Lord says (a) must affect all who believe his mission, and are attentive; 'and who'soever shall speak a word against the son of man, it shall 'be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against 'the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.' Yet should not pious Christians be too much intimidated. The words are part of an answer to the murmurs of proud malicious Pharises and Scribes; both at that time popular, from specious outward appearances; but 'abomination' itself in the sight of God (b): they did blaspheme the miraculous power of Jesus; saying, (c) 'this fellow doth not cast out 'devils, save by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.'

Not content with ordinary batred, they were filled with wrath, from envy, even to distraction. Jesus knew their hearts, and speaks to them by various irrefragable arguments. Then awfully forewarns them as above. Compare Mat xii. 31. His miracles had been numerous and singularly beneficent. They were done in the face of all men, and every where. Their truth was undeniable. Rabbi, said Nicodemus, (d) we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles, except God be with him. Most suitable natural conclusion, to every one not blinded by prejudice. And such were the persons spoken to. They were so violent as to ascribe the effects of goodness itself to malice. His own, person, as son of

a Luke xii. to. h.chap, avi. 15 c Mat, xii, 21 d John iii 2,

man, he overlooks; but not what already had, and would hereafter be done by the spirit.

Because mischief upon earth could not be carried further, he afferts that whilft this was continued, their state was an inretrievably lost one. No superior evidence had they to hope for. Even E sptian Magicians did yield to the miracles wrought by Mofes, the Jewish lawgiver. Pharifees and Scribes, as yet, would not, It was in part, owing to his low outward. state as fon of man; but when 'exalted to the right hand of the Majesty, greater works still were to be done in his name (a): to blaspheme which, was to sum up at once their guilt and future wretchedness.

Here, it may be proper to ask, if, ever since the age of our bleffed Lord Jesus Christ, and his apostles, the malice of unbelief could be carried to such an extent ! Certainly not. And therefore unreasonable scruples ought to be distribled. After all, there may be approaches to it; and these, even in the lowest degree, are to be guarded against Be it known unto you all, faid St. Peter, (b) and to all the people of Ifrael, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raifed from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here' before you whole. 'This is the stone which was fet at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there falvation in any other; for there is none

other name under heaven given among men, whereby we

' must be faved.'

The feal to that truth, was no other than the immediate infinite wisdom, power, and beneficence of the spirit of the Most High,' in these sacred apostolical messengers; and to oppose the fight of this, though now impossible, is what

may be refembled, 'by an evil' obstinate 'heart of unbelief. in departing from the living God To hate Christ, the brightness of his glory, is,' in effect, ' to hate the Father alfo; (a) to do both without a cause.' Alas, alas, that such a thing was ever done. Now, when the ' Jewish rulers, · elders, and scribes saw the boldness of Peter and John, (b) and perceived that they were unlearned, and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could fay nothing against it. But,' fay they to one another, ' what shall we do to these men? for that indeed a f notable miracle has been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us firaitly threaten them,' and fo forth.

Ah, what shall we say to this opposing spirit. They were not, you see, to be argued with. And though having sewer causer of aggravation, their crime of unterior may be approached to. Let determined insidels, in a Christian country, lay this matter to heart. Sincere timorous souls have nothing to sear from it; they stand in direct opposition to such a crime. Their only wish is, to be strong in the saith; and by humble prayer, with right use of what they have; they may be sure of success. Let them think often as to the wise rules and principles of the gospel; their attestation by miracle; whilst they observe with rapture, how Christ defends the Father's glory above his own.

He bore, as the fon of man, what he will not so easily forgive since the effusion of the Ho'y Ghost. 'How shall we 'escape, (c) if we neglect so great salvation, which at the

² John zv, 23. 25. h Acts iv, 13, 16, &c. c Heb. ii. 3, 4.

first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him. God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? May we dread above all things, to fin with malice; to oppose, and pervert truth; to grow old in any of them. Beware lest that come upon you, (a) which is spoken of by the prophets; behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish, for I work a work in your days, which you shall in no wife believe, though a man declare it unto you.

THE

CONCLUSION.

Thould be the earnest desire of every religious teacher, to die as well as live in the service of mankind. King David, who was also a prophet, foreseeing his death to be nigh, 'assembled all the princes of Israel, (b) and the 'princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies 'that ministered to the king by course, and the captains 'over the thousands, and the captains over the hundreds, 'and the stewards over all the substance, and possessions of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, and with the 'mighty men, and all the valiant unto Jerusalem; where he exhorted them to the sear of God; and Solomon, his successor in office, after a most affecting manner, 'to know the Lord God of his Father, and serve him with a 'perfect heart and with a willing mind.'

a.Acts xiii. 40, 41. b t Chron, xxviii. 1, &c.

St. Paul, being to 'leave the elders of the church of Ephesus, (c) called them together,' and lest them under the power of his farewell advice; which is laudable at least to imitate. His words are very tender, and well became a more than ordinary long residence among them. It is as much as most can pretend to, that they be just able to aim at an approach to him, though distant.

He was with them at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations which befell him. He kept back nothing that was profitable; but shewed them, and taught them publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, adds he, behold I go bound in the spirit, unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying, that bands and affictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might sinish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus Christ, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

And now, behold, I know that ye all among whom I have gone, preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. There may be a time to speak of one's self, though it may seem to be with advantage; and what time so proper, as when the end of all earthly things is at hand. Under godly fear, 'lest that by any means, when I have preached to others (d), I my self should be a cast away,' let this, after

er

ié

0

fome former printed performances, bear witness to some endeavour in behalf of a favourite people's everlasting good; 'in which,' God knows, 'no man's filver, or gold, or ap-'parel has been coveted.' If returns, above expence, were made to any of them; these, to the last farthing, and to the best of my judgement, have been laid out for spiritual uses to the labouring poor.

It is, by way of appeal to all ranks, that in ministring to fo numerous and respectable an audience, they have had the word of God explained to them by entire written lectures, besides fermons, in the following order; St: Luke's Gospel, the Proverbs of Solomon, the whole epiftles, as they are classed in our copies, a third part of the Psalms, Mark and John's gospels, Luke's for a second time next to finished, and now his other treatise of apostolical Acts entered upon. Some have more facility in carrying on that mode of instruction, which from the beginning has appeared to me the most awful; and, for certain, the most beneficial. They have divine goodness to praise for this. One of his fervants is satisfied to reflect, that by far the greater part of these lecturer, either before or after, have not been less than three different times transcribed; such reverence appearing due to the infallible Randard.

The other forms of teaching have been the same way written at large, as occasions, with circumstances did lead to them. Whence it may serve to forewarn those who are rather apt to censure, and even to give up with their teachers entirely on account of their freedom of speech! They are, and cannot be pointed at, whose crimes were quite unknown, till the delivery was over: nor, they whose presence took place as we would say, by accident; or much more piously, by a hand quite unseen, and which ought highly to be revered.

Close inspection is what few characters will admit of. In

' many things we all offend (a). With long-fuffering forbearing one another in love, therefore, is the way to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace (b).' They who aim at eminence will be fure to fludy these rules. 'Unto every one of us is given grace, according to the meafure of the gift of Christ.' If it be not optional to a passor, whether he should think, and compose; neither can the affair of attendance be optional from those to whom they have been regularly called to minister. Such do watch • for precious fouls (a), as they who must give an account : that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable.' They who would teach with success, must do it upon some regular plan that solicits a regular hearing. As allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, (d) ' fo they speak, not as pleasing men, but God which ' trieth our hearts.'

It is a bumbling thing indeed, to look back upon early weaknesses, premature thoughts, and prejudices from various causes, which require that we 'bear one another's burdens (e), and so fulfil the law of Christ. Him that is weak in the faith (f), receive you, but not to doubtful disputations. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification (g).' Abhor all kinds and degrees of deadly animosities, and hidden attacks upon character.

Humility is the ground work of excellence. It looks for trials, and provides against them, Such do likewise know how to condescend. 'If it be possible (b), and as much as 'in them lieth, they would live peaceably with all men.' Besides what is essential, they keep back, with their knowledge (i), 'nothing that is prositable. Teaching from house 'to house,' gives them a great advantage for this; which

a Jam. iil. 2. b Eph iv, 2, 3, 7. c Heb. xiii. 17. d t Thef. ii. 4. e Gal. vi. 2. f Rom. xiv, 1. g chap. xv. 2. h Rom. xii. 18, 1 Acts xx. 20.

the dignity of public exercises will not always admit of. Domestic or relative duties will upon those occasions be spoken to with special prudence. Submission to civil government, in what is lawful; mild samily rule; obedience from servants; the right tutorage of children, for both worlds; a respect for the Lord's day; and how to improve by divine ordinances: all of them delicate subjects.

Christian practice may be summed up in few words: repentance toward God (k), and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. They are distinct saving graces; and should not, as they often are, both by young and old, be jumbled together. Two Greek words express repentance; one signifying, after-thought, or coming to a better mind; the other, after-care, to live 'soberly, righteously, and godly (1). Faith receives and rests upon the Lord Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King. The catechetical answers to each are admirable; and together with the account of Christ's offices, form an useful human compend of the gospel, perhaps not inferior to any.

Everyone's chief desire and aim ought to be, that they finish their course with joy.' Either this must be done, or the consequences prove satal. The Christian line of outy is clearly marked out. Obedience universal and persevering, from devout principle (m). Happy pastors who can take their flocks to record, saying, as if they were to see each other's faces no more (n). We are pure from the blood of all men, for we have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.' Such an example did St. Paul shew to the established elders, bishops, or overseers of Ephesus; and not only they, but every other since is bound to follow him. This, and nothing less than this, can mutually warm the heart of right religious friendship.

k Acls xx. 21. 1 l'it, ii, 12. m Pfal. cxix. 6. Rom, ii. 7. Phil iii. 14, n Acls xx. 25, 26.

By the same devout means, they will be mutually comforte', at separating. 'For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord 'Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and 'joy (0).'

Such freedom, through life and at death, must be the fruit of earnessness. 'Meditate upon these things (p), give thy self wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear unto all. Take heed unto thyself and thy doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.' Indeed, even with their utmost zeal, they will be often falling short; and obliged, by redoubled ifforts to correct their by past desciences. O how difficult a thing is it thus to minister!

The church is a flock of God (q), and purchased with the blood of his own dear Son.' An beritage peculiarly appropriated to both. Teachers and people have all one rule.

Let a man so account of us as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God (r): moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be faithful.' And of those for whom they act, that they 'believe not every spirit (s), but try the spirits, whether they be of God: because many false Prophets are gone out into the world. We, the Apostles, are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us.' Each very soon must answer for themselves at an infallible divine tribunal.

'The things which become found doctrine,' are largely fet forth, Tit. ii. throughout; and ought to be kept much under the eye of both teachers and taught. 'For the time will come (t), that they will not endure found doctrine: but after their own lusts shall they heap up to them-

o (Thef. ii, 19, 20 pt Tim. iv. 15, 16. q Acts xx. 28. r 1 Cor. iv. 1, 1. s 1 John iv. 1, 6. t 2 Fim iii. 1, &c.

felves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables' Nay, says St. Paul, in his va'edistory discourse so often alluded to (u), 'I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch.'

In our established church, thank God, there is a long course of trials prescribed, which, next to certain, must ensure against ignorance and vice. Their general soundness also, in point of dostrine, may be known. The whole together, surnish an admirable security; and the times may come, when without hazard to either truth, or holiness, still more freedom may be obtained, especially to entrants of tender conscience. The manner of presenting to parishes, by a patronage law, will have some inconveniences, considering the different sorts of congregations throughout a whole kingdom; and the different degrees of literature, with other qualities, to accommodate these. But it is doubtful if one much better can be thought of.

Let the people at large bless the fountain of love, that they have an offer of good things, without any expence, save that of attending. And should the worst happen, which can happen; for a mere trisse of this world, they have no obstruction from superiors to choose for themselves. Meanwhile, the way of peace, without subdividing, appears to be preferable. When the late rapid progress of all arts and sciences is attended to, that of theology will be found to rank in the very foremost line; and is well testified by the able appearances of young applying men for sacred work. The probability then is, that our successors in effice will have still greater advantages for

your spiritual good; unless, which has happened to some, certain undeniably beneficial ones have been too much disregarded.

That the omnipotent Lord may encourage a faithful younger brother, who doth yet officiate among you, by what appears to be his right, and will no doubt be attended to, as far as kind civil rulers of our place have it in their power; 'that your mutual rejoicing may be every day more 'abundant in Christ Jesus; that your conversation be as it becometh the gospel; that ye stand fast in one spirit, striv-'ing together for the pure faith of the gospel,' and not every one for his own peculiar taffe; will be, to the time of final separation, the affectionate prayer of your eldest pastor. Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ (u), the great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you ' perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleafing in his fight, through Jefus Christ: to whom be glory for ever and ever.

u Heb. xiii. 20 21.

A I R, July 19th, 1796.

PSALMS AND HYMNS-

SUITED TO EACH

OF THE

FOREGOING SUBJECTS,

AND.

NEARLY IN THEIR ORDER;

THE GREATER PART OF THEM EXTRACTED

FROM A

JUDICIOUS COLLECTION FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

LIVERPOOL, J. GORE, CASTLESTREET.

- I. Praise due to God. Psal cxlvii.

 A WAKE, ye Saints, to praise your King;
 Your noblest passions raise;
 Your pious pleasure, while you sing,
 increasing with the praise.
- 2 Great is the Lord, and works unknown are his divine employ;
 But still his faints are near his throne, his treasure, and his joy.
- 3 Heaven, Earth, and Sea confess his hand, and bids the vapours rise; Light'ning and storm, at his command, sweep through the sounding skies.
- 4 Sing to his praise in lofty Hymns, his wondrous works rehearse; Make them the theme of your discourse, the subject of your verse.

II. God Infinite. Pfal. cxxxix.

- Thine eye furveys with piercing view,
 My rising and my resting hours;
 My heart and flesh, with all their powers.
- 2 My thoughts before they are my own, Are to my God distinctly known; He knows the words I mean to speak, Ere from my op'ning lips they break.
- 3 Surrounded by thy pow'r I stand; On every side I find thine hand: O skill for human reach too high! Too dazzling bright for mortal eye!
- 4 May all these thoughts possess my breast, Where'er I rove, where'er I rest; Nor let my weaker passions dare Consent to sin; for God is there.

III. God eternal. Pfal. cii. 25, &c.

- Jehovah fill'd his throne;
 Ere men were form'd, or angels made,
 the Maker liv'd alone.
- 2 The feas and skies must perish hence, and vast destruction come; The creatures look how old they grow, and wait their final doom.
- 3 Well, let the sea shrink all away, and slame melt down the skies; My God shall live an endless day, when his creation dies.

IV. God unchangeable. Pfal. xc.

THOU didst, O mighty God, exist, ere time began its race;
Before the ample elements.
fill'd up the voids of space.

- or prais'd thy wondrous name; Thy blifs (O facred fpring of life!) and glory were the fame.
- And when the pillars of the world with fudden ruin break,
 And all this vast and goodly frame,
 finks in the mighty wreck:
- 4 Amid the universal shock, thy throne shall stand secure: The glories which compose thy name, through endless years endure.

V. God. One, living, and true. Pfal. xcvi.

- A MONG the princes earthly gods, there's none hath pow'r divine; Nor is their nature, Mighty Lord, nor are their works like thine.
- 2 All that confess thee great, and great the wonders thou hast done; Shall own that thou art God supreme, that thou art God alone
- While heav'n and all who dwell on high, to thee their voices raise

 Let the whole earth affist the sky, and join t'advance thy praise.

VI. The Wisdom of God. Psal. cxlviii.

- THAIL, King Supreme! All wise and good! to thee our thoughts we raise, While nature's beauties, wide display'd, inspire our souls with praise.
- 2 Thy glory beams in every flar, which gilds the gloom of night; And decks the rifing face of morn with rays of cheering light
- 3. The funny hill, the dewy lawn, with thousand beauties shine;

Z 2

The filent grove and awful shade proclaim thy wife design.

4 Great nature's God, still may these scenes our serious hours engage;
Still may our grateful hearts consult thy work's instructive page.

VII. The Power of God. Pfal exlvii.

- How bright thine armies shine!
 Where is the power that vies with thee,
 or truth compar'd with thine?
- 2 Heav'n, earth, and air, and fea, are thine, and the dark world of hell;
 How can thine arm in vengeance shine,
 when mortals do rebel!
- 3 Thrice happy are the fouls who know thy kind inviting voice:

 Peace shall attend the path they go, who in thy name rejoice.

VIII. The holiness of God. Pfal. cxlv. 17, &c.

- THE righteous Lord for ever reigns, And fills his holy throne above; Justice and truth he still maintains, And faves the people of his love.
- 2 The men who know his glorious name
 Will trust in his abounding grace;
 For none were ever put to shame,
 Who humbly sought their Maker's face.
- 3 Sing praises to the heav'nly King, Ye faints, with whom he loves to dwell; And while his courts with praises ring, To all the world his wonders tell.

IX. The Goodness of God. Psal. civ. 10, &c.

ORD, thou art good; all nature shows thee full, and free, and kind;

Thy bounty through creation flows, nor can it be confin'd.

- 2 It shines in stars, and flows in streams, and bursts from ev'ry hill;
 It spreads thro' all the spreading main, and in soft show'rs distil.
- 3 High admiration let it raife, and kind affections move; Employ my tongue in fongs of praife, and fill my heart with love.

X. The faithfulness of God. Pfal. xcviii,

- TELL of God's wondrous faithfulness, and found his power abroad,
 Sing the kind promite of his grace,
 and the performing God,
- 2 Proclaim "falvation from the Lord,
 "for finful dying men;"
 His hand hath writ the facred word,
 with an immortal pen.
- 3 He that can dash whole worlds to death, and make them when he please, He speaks, and that Almighty Breath sulfils his great decrees.

XI. The mercy of God. Pfal. cxxx.

S HOULD'ST thou, O God, severely judge, who could the trial bear?

Beneath thy frown my heart could faint, and humble in despair.

But mercy, mercy, dwells with thee, hope dawns amidst my fears,
Divine forgiveness large and free;
shall stop my flowing tears.

On thee, good Lord, my foul shall wait; my trust is in thy word:
Thy word of grace can light create,

and facred peace afford.

4 Let therefore mourning fouls on God with cheerfulness rely; For penitence can ne'er be vain, nor hated fin destroy.

XII. God Creator. Pfal. c.

- Lord how excellent thy name, how glorious to behold;
 Engraven fair on all thy works, in characters of gold!
- 2 From land to land, from world to world, thy fame is echo'd round; And ages, as they pass, transmit, the never dying found.
- 3 Angels, the eldest sons of light, began the lofty song: They saw the heavens expand abroad, and earth on nothing hung.
- Let men unite to praise their God, let them adore his name; The wonders of his power and love let the whole earth proclaim.

ANOTHER XIII. God Governor. Pfal, CXXXVI.

- I fing th' Almighty power of God, that made the mountains rife; That fpread the flowing feas abroad, and built the lofty skies.
- the fun to rule the day,

 The moon shines full at his command,
 and all the stars obey.
- 3 I fing the goodness of the Lord, that filled the earth with food, He form'd the creatures with his word, and then pronounc'd them good.
- His hand is my perpetual guard; be keeps me with his eye;

Why fhould I then forget the Lord, who is for ever nigh?

XIV. God the preserver of all things.

- Sing to the Lord Jehovah's name, and in his strength rejoice; When his salvation is our theme, exalted be our voice.
- Let princes hear, let angels know, how poor their nature's feem, Those gods on high, and gods below, when once compar'd with him.
- 3 Come, and with humble fouls adore, come kneel before his face. Then shall the creatures of his pow'r, be children of his grace.

Pfal. cxxxix. 14, &c. XV. God the friend of good men.

- THY power and goodness round me shine; my form thy wisdom shows, My soul adores the hand divine, whence every bleffing flows:
- 2 Lord, when I count thy mercies o'er, they firke me with furprife, Not all the fands that spread the shore to equal numbers rife.
- These on my heart by night I keep; how kind, how dear to me.

 O may the hours that end my sleep;
 still find my thoughts with thee!

XVI. ANOTHER. Pfal. xxxii. 1, &c.

- THE evining rests our weary head, and angels guard the room, We wake, and we admire the bed which was not made our tomb.
- The rifing morning can't affure that we shall end the day,

For death stands ready at the door to make our lives his prey.

3 God is our fun, whose daily light our joy and fafety brings; Our feeble frames lie still at night, beneath his guardian wings.

ANOTHER. Pfal. lxxi. 5, &c.

- I MY God, my everlasting hope,
 I live upon thy truth;
 Thine hands have held my childhood up,
 and strengthen'd all my youth.
- 2 Cast me not off, when strength declines, when hoary hairs arise;
 And round me, let thy goodness shine, whene'er thy servant dies.
- 3 Then in the history of mine age, when men review my days, They'll read thy love in ev'ry page, in ev'ry line thy praise.

ANOTHER. Pfal. xxxvi. 5, &c.

- THE hand of mercy finds us food, and we are cloth'd with love, While grace stands pointing out the road, which leads our fouls above.
- 2 Thy goodness runs an endless round; all glory to the Lord! Thy mercy never knows a bound; be thy great name ador'd!
- 3 Thus we begin the lasting song; and when we close our eyes, Let the next age thy praise prolong, till time and nature dies.

XVII. God our portion. Pfal. lxxiii. 25,&c...

ERE I in heaven without my God,
'twould be no joy to me;

And while this earth is my abode, I long for none but thee.

2 What if the springs of life were broke, and flesh and heart should faint; God is my soul's eternal rock; the strength of every faint.

3 To raise my thoughts to thee, my God, shall be my sweet employ;
My tongue shall sound thy works abroad, and tell the world my joy.

XVIII. Safety in God. Pfal. cxxi. Short Metre.

W HEN overwhelm'd with grief, my heart within me dies, Helpless and far from all relief, to heaven I list mine eyes.

2 O lead me to the rock, that's high above my head; And make the covert of thy wings my shelter, and my shade.

Within thy presence, God,
I ever would abide.
Thou art the tow'r of my desence,
the resuge where I hide.

of those who fear thy name;
If endless life be their reward
I shall possess the same.

Pfal. xix. 7, &c. The bleffings of Revelation.

XIX. The Holy Scriptures.

WHEREVER God doth fend his word
he pours forth joyous light;
There finners learn to know the Lord
and guide their steps aright.

His laws are just and pure,
 his truth without deceit:
 His promise stands for ever sure,
 and his rewards are great.

I spread thy praise abroad, Accept the worship and the song, my Saviour and my God.

XX. The Miffion of Chrift. Pfal xcviii, 1, &c.

- S ING to the Lord, ye distant lands, ye tribes of ev'ry tongue;
 His new discover'd grace demands
 a new and nobler fong.
- 2 Say to the nations, Jesus reigns, God's own almighty Son; His pow'r the finking world sustains, and grace surrounds his throne.
- 3 Let heav'n proclaim the joyful day; joy thro' the earth be feen; Let cities shine in bright array, and fields in cheerful green.
- 4 Behold he comes, he comes to bless the nations as their Lord; To shew the world his righteousness, and fend his truth abroad.

XXI. The love of God in Christ. Pfal. xxii. 22, &c.

- Proclaim our wife and pow'rful God:
 And his rich glories from afar
 Sparkle in ev'ry rolling star.
- 2 But in Christ's looks a glory stands, The noblest work of divine hands; The pleasing lustre of his eyes Outshines the wonders of the skies.
- My thoughts rejoice at Jesus' name:
 Ye angels dwell upon the sound;
 Ye heavens reslect it to the ground.

XXII. The hope of Pardon by Christ. Pfal. cxviii. 20, &c.

WAS mercy fill'd the throne, the throne and wrath stood filent by,
When Christ was fent with pardons down to rebels doom'd to die.

2 Now sinners dry your tears, your tears, let hopeless forrow cease,
Bow to the sceptre of his love, and take the offer'd peace.

ye lay an humble claim.

To the falvation thou hast brought,
and love and praise thy name.

XXIV. Hope of heaven by Christ. Pfal. xvi. 8, &c.

Be his abounding mercy praif'd, his Majesty ador'd.

2 When from the dead he raif'd his Son, and call'd him to the fky,

He gave our fouls a lively hope, that we should never die.

3 There's an inheritance divine, referv'd against that day; 'Tis uncorrupted, undefiled, and cannot fade away.

4 Saints by the pow'r of God are kept till the falvation come: We walk by faith as strangers here, till Christ shall call us home.

XXV. Bleffings of good Government. Pfal. xxx, 12, &c.

K INGDOMS in firm foundations stand while virtue finds reward,
And finners perish from the land,
by justice, and the sword.

- where laws and liberties combine to make the people bleft, There crowns with brightest lustre shine, and kings are honour'd best.
- 3 Let Cæsar's due be ever paid to Cæsar and his throne; But consciences and souls are made to be the Lord's alone.
- XXVI. The Lord's Day. Plal. cxlv. i, &c.

 SWEET is the work, my God, my king,

 To praise thy name give thanks, and fing;

 To shew thy love by morning light,

 And talk of all thy truth at night.
- 2 Sweet is the day of facred rest;
 No mortals cares shall seize my breast;
 My noblest pow'rs shall join to raise
 A tribute of exalted praise.
- 3 My heart shall triumph in the Lord, And bless his works, and bless his word, His works of grace, how bright they shine! How deep his counsels! how divine!
- XXVII. The House of God. Pfal. lxiii. 1, &c.

 I N God's own house pronounce his praise,
 his grace he there reveals:
 To heav'n your joy and wonder raise,
 for there his glory dwells.
- 2 Let all your facred passions move, while you rehearse his deeds, But the great work of faving love your highest praise exceed.
- 3 All that have motion, life and breath, proclaim your Maker blest;
 Yet, when my voice expires in death, my foul shall praise him best!

X'VIII. The Coming of Messiah. Plal lxxxix. 1, &c.

JOY to the world, the Lord is come; let earth receive her king:

Let ev'ry heart prepare him room, And heav'n and nature fing.

2 Joy to the earth, the Saviour reigns, let men their fongs employ; While fields and floods, rocks hills and plains, Repeat the founding joy.

3 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove;
The glories of his righteousness,
The wonders of his love.

XXIX. Hosannah to Jesus Christ. Pfal. cxviii: 24, &c.

I ARK the glad found! The Saviour comes, the Saviour promis'd long! Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne, and every voice a Song.

2 He comes, the pris'ners to release, in Satan's bondage held; The gates of brass before him burst, the iron feeters yield

3 He comes, from thickest films of vice, to clear the mental ray; And on the eye oppress'd with night, to pour celestial day.

4 He comes, the broken heart to bind, the bleeding foul to cure; And with the treasures of his grace, enrich the humble poor.

our glad hosannas, Prince of peace, thy welcome shall proclaim; And heav'n's eternal arches ring, with thy beloved name.

XXX. The obedience of Christ. Psal xl. 5, &c.

I HUS spake the Saviour, "Lo, I'm here,
"my God, to do thy will;
"Whate'er thy sacred books declare,
"thy servant shall fulfil.

Aa

2 "Thy law is ever in my fight, "I keep it near my heart;

" Mine ears are open with delight, "To what thy lips impart."

- 3 Much he reveal'd his Father's grace, and much his truth he shew'd; And preach'd the way of righteousness, Where great assemblies stood.
- 4 His Father's honour touch'd his heart; he pitied finners cries: And to complete the Saviour's part, was made a facrifice.

XXXI. The example of Christ. Pfal. exxxviii. 4, &c.

- Y dear Redeemer, and my Lord, I read my duty in thy word; But in thy life thy law appears, Drawn out in living characters.
- 2 Such was thy truth, and fuch thy zeal, Such def'rence to thy Father's will, Such love, and meekness so divine, I would transcribe, and make them mine.
- 3 Be thou my pattern; let me bear, More of thy lovely image here; Then God, the judge, shall own my name, Among the followers of the Lamb.

XXXII. The Jufferings of Christ. Pfal. xxii: 12, &c.

- BARBAROUS people! Cruel Priests!

 How they stood round like savage beasts;

 Like lions gaping to devour,

 When God had lest him in their pow'r!
- 2 They wound his head, his hands, his feet, Till streams of blood each other meet; By lot his garments they divide, And mock the pangs in which he di'd.
- 3 But God his Father heard his cry, Rais'd from the dead he reigns on high;

The nations learn his righteousness, And humble sinners taste his grace.

XXXIII. Christ's Death and victory. Pfal. ii. 7, &c.

Th' important work is done:

Hence shall his Sov'reign throne arise,

His kingdom is begun.

2 Exalted at his Father's fide, fits our victorious Lord; To heav'n and hell his hands divide, the vengeance or reward.

3 The faints from his propitious eye, await their fev'ral crowns; And all the fons of darkness fly, the terrors of his frowns.

XXXIV. The Refurrection of Christ. Pfal. lxviii. 18, &c.

Help us, O Lord, descend and bring, Salvation from thy throne.

Blest be the Lord, who comes to men, with messages of grace;
 Who comes, in God his Father's name,
 To save our sinful race.

3 Hosannah, in the highest strains, the church on earth can raise; The church above, in which he reigns, shall give him nobler praise.

ANOTHER. Pfal. xvi. 8, &c.

I "I fet the Lord before my face,
"he bears my courage up:
"My heart and tongue their joys express,
"my flesh shall rest in hope."

2 Thus, in the name of Christ the Lord, the holy David sung;

A a 2

And providence fulfill'd the word of his prophetic tongue.

3 Then he destroy'd the powers of death, and vanquish'd all his foes, Ye faints remember and rejoice, For then the Saviour rose.

XXXV. Miffion of the Holy Ghoft. Pfal. cviii. 1, &c.

A RM'D by the spirit, Christ sent his Champions forth,
From east to west, from south to north;
Go, spread your Saviour's cause,

"Go, fpread the mystery of the cross."

- 2 Nations, the learned and the rude, Are by these heavenly arms subdu'd; While Satan rages at his loss, And hates the doctrine of the cross.
- 3 Great King of grace, my heart subdue, I would be led in triumph too, A willing captive to my Lord, And sing the vict'ries of his word.

XXXVI. The intercession of Christ. Plal. alv. 1, &c.

OUCH'D with a sympathy divine, Christ knows our seeble frame; He knows what strong temptations mean, For he has felt the same

Then let our humble faith address,
His mercy and he pow'r;
We shall obtain deliviring grace,
In the distressful hour.

XXXVII. Offices of Christ Pfal. cx. 1, &c.

I WE bless the Prophet of the Lord, who comes with truth and grace; Jesus, thy spirit and thy word, shall guide us in thy ways.

2 We rev'rence our High Priest above, who offer'd up his blood; Who lives to carry on his love, and intercedes with God.

- We honour our exalted king,
 how wife are his commands!
 He guards our fouls from hell and fin,
 by his Almighty hands.
- 4 Hosannah to his glorious name, who saves by different ways; His mercies lay a fov'reign claim, to our immortal praise.

XXXVIII. Christ King of the Church. Pfal. Ixxii. 1, &c.

- A S rain on meadows newly mown,
 So shall Christ send his influence down;
 His grace on fainting souls distils,
 Like heav'nly dew on thirsty hills.
- The heathen lands that lie beneath, The shades of over-spreading death, Revive at his first dawning light, And deserts blossom at the sight.
- 3 The faints shall flourish in his days, Drest in the robes of joy and praise; Peace, like a river, from his throne, Shall flow to nations yet unknown.

XXXIX. The Lord's Supper. Pfal. cxvi. 15, &c.

- JESUS invites his faints, his faints,
 To meet around his board.
 Here pardon'd finners fit and hold,
 Communion with their Lord.
- Here we survey that love, that love, which spoke in ev'ry breath;
 Which crown'd each action of his life, And triumph'd in his death.
- Here let our pow'rs unite, unite, his glorious name to raise; Pleasure and joy fill ev'ry mind, and ev'ry voice be praise

Aa3

And while we share the gifts, the gifts, his gracious hands bestow,

Let every heart in friendship join'd, with kind affections glow.

ANOTHER Pfal, xxiii. 1, &cc.

- I'I IS pleasure more than earth can give, Christ's goodness thro' these veils to see; His table food celestial yields, And happy they who sit with thee.
- 2 But O what vast transporting joys, Shall fill our breasts, our tongue inspire; When join'd with the celestial train, Our grateful souls thy love admire!
- 3 When these mean bodies all resin'd, Persect and glorious as thine own; Unwearied shall our minds obey, And join to make thy savours known.

XL. The new covenant fealed Pfal xxii. 26, &c.

- " HE promise of my Father's love,
 " shall stand for ever good;"
 Christ said, and gave his soul to death,
 And seal'd the grace with blood.
- 2 Then to the Cov nant of thy word,
 I'll fet my worthless name;
 I seal th' engagement to my Lord,
 and make my humble claim.
- 3 Thy light, and strength, and pard'ning grace, and glory shall be mine;
 My life, and soul. and all my pow'rs, shall be for ever thine.

O that the Lord would guide my ways,
To keep his statutes still;
O that my God would grant me grace,

To know and do his will!

- 2 From vanity turn off mine eyes; let no corrupt design, Nor covetous desire arise, within this soul of mine.
- My foul hath gone too far astray;
 my feet too often slip;
 Yet, since I've not forgot thy way,
 restore thy wand'ring sheep.
- O fave thy fervant, Lord;
 Thou art my shield, my hiding place,
 my hope is in thy word.

XLII. The Lord's Day. Short Metre.

- Welcome to this reviving breaft, and these rejoicing eyes.
- 2 The Lord himself comes near, and feasts his saints to-day; Here we may sit, and see him here, and love, and praise, and pray.
- In which our God hath been,
 Is fweeter than ten thousand days,
 of pleasurable sin.

ANOTHER Pfal. cxxii. 1, &c.

- HOW did my heart rejoice to hear, my friends devoutly fay, "In Zion let us all appear, "and keep the folemn day?"
- the church adorn'd with grace, Stands like a palace built for God, to shew his milder face.
- 3 Peace be within this facred place, and joy a constant guest;

With holy gifts and heav'nly grace, by her attendants bleft.

4 My foul shall pray for Zion still, while life or breath remains; There my best friends, my kindred dwell, there God my Saviour reigns.

XLIII. The exellence of love. Pfal. xv. 1, &c.

- HAPPY the heart where virtues reign, where love inspires the breast;

 Love is the brightest of the train, and strengthens all the rest.
- 2 Love fuffers long with patient eye, nor is provok'd in haste; She lets the present injury die, and soon forgets the past.
- 3 She nor defires, nor feeks to know, the feandals of the times; Nor looks with pride on these below, nor envies those who climb.
- 4 She lays her own advantage by, to feek her neighbours good: So God's own Son came down to die, and fav'd us by his blood.
- y Love is the grace that lives and fings, when faith and hope shall cease; 'Tis love shall strike our joyful strings, in the bright realms of bliss.

XLIV Domestic love and happiness. Pfal. cxxxiii.

- O! what an entertaining fight, are kindred that agree! How bleft the house where hearts unite, in bands of piety!
- 2 Their souls are form'd for joy and peace, their hearts and hopes are one; And kind designs to serve and please, thro' all their actions run.

3 How happy is the pious house, where zeal and friendship meet; Where songs of praise and mingled vows, make the communion sweet!

4 Such pleasure crowns the heav'nly hills; thus faints are blest above; Where joy like morning dews distils, and all the air is love.

XLV. Humility and submiffion. Pfal. CXXXI.

I S there ambition in my heart?
fearch, gracious God, and fee;
Or, do I act a haughty part?
Lord, I appeal to thee.

2 I charge my thoughts be humble still, and all my carriage mild; Content, my Father, with thy will, and patient as a child.

The patient foul, the lowly mind, fhall have a large reward;
Let faints in forrow lie refign'd, and trust a faithful Lord.

XLVI. Temptations of life. Pfal. xvii. 14, 40

we look on things below;
Honour, and gold and finful joy,
How vain and dangerous too!

2 God is mine all sufficient good, my portion and my choice; In him my vast desires are fill'd, and all my pow'rs rejoice.

In vain the world accosts my ear, and tempts my heart anew; I cannot buy your blefs to dear, nor part with heaven for you. XLVII. Human life. Pfal. xc. 1, &c.

- UR wasting life grows shorter still, as months and days increase;
 And ev'ry beating pulse we tell,
 still leaves the number less.
- 2 Good God! On what a flender thread, hang everlasting things! Th' eternal state of all mankind, upon life's feeble strings.
- 3 Waken, O Lord, our active powers, to walk this dang'rous road; And, if our fouls be hurried hence, may they be found with God.

XLVIII. Comfort in troubles. Pfal. xxxiv. 1, &c.

- HEN fickness shakes the languid frame, each dazzling pleasure slies;
 Phantoms of bliss no more detain, our long deluded eyes.
- 2 The tott'ring frame of mortal life shall crumble into dust;
 Nature shall faint; but learn my foul, on nature's God to trust.
- on his all gracious God,

 From ev'ry frown may draw a joy,
 and kifs the chast'ning rod.
- Nor him shall death itself alarm,
 on heaven his soul relies;
 With joy he views his Maker's love,
 and with composure dies.

XLIX. Death and eternity. Pfal. ciii. 13, &c.

S TOOP down, my thoughts, which us'd to rife,
converse a while with death,
Think how a gasping mortal lies,
and pants away his breath.

- 2 But oh, the foul that never dies, at once it leaves the clay; My thoughts purfue it where it flies, and track its wond?rous way.
- 3 Up to the courts, where angels dwell, it mounts in triumph there:
 Or finks, reluctant down to hell, in horror and despair.
- 4 My God, to thine all gracious hands, my deathless foul I trust; Nor fear to meet the high command, which calls me back to dust.
 - L. Happiness of the dying Christian. Psal. ciii. 1, &c.
- EAR what the voice from heav'n proclaims,
 For all the pious dead;
 Sweet is the favour of their names,
 and foft their fleeping bed.
- 2 They die in Jesus, and are bless'd, how kind their slumbers are! From suff'rings and from sins releas'd, and freed from ev'ry snare.
- 3 Far from this world of toil and strife, they're present with the Lord; The labours of their mortal life end in a large reward.
 - LI. Christ coming to judgement. Pfal. 1. 1, &c.
- I ESUS, adorn'd with grace divine, ascends the judgement throne; Thro' heav'n's extended realms above, he makes his glories known.
- 2 Before him fee the world on fire! the burning earth and feas, With mingled ruin, foon expire, and fink before his face.
- 3 The faints, obedient to his call, with joy receive their crowns,

The wicked into ruin fall, beneath his wrathful frowns.

A How shall I bear that awful day, and stand the solemn test? I give all sinful joys away, to be for ever blest.

LII. A prospect of future happiness. Psal. lxiii. 1, &

- WHAT finners value, I refign;
 Lord, 'tis enough that thou art mine;
 I shall behold thy blessful face,
 And stand complete in righteousness.
- 2 Then shall I see, and hear, and know, All I desir'd or wish'd below; And ev'ry power find sweet employ, In that eternal world of joy.
- And flesh and sense of the soul.

 And served pleasures of the soul.

ANOTHER. Pfal cxix 161, &c.

- Nor fense, nor ear hath heard, Nor fense, nor reason known, What joys the Father hath prepar'd, for those who love the Son.
- 2 But the good spirit of the Lord, reveals a heav'n to come, The beams of glory, in the word, allure and guide us home.
- 3 Pure are the joys above the skies, and all the region peace; No wanton tongue, no envious eye, can see, or taste, the bless.
- 4 When I can read my title clear, to mansions in the skies;
 I bid farewell to ev'ry tear, and wipe my weeping eyes.

LIII. The Christian Race. Pfal cxix. 57, &c.

- A WAKE, my foul, stretch ev'ry nerve, and press with vigour on;
 A heav'nly race demands thy zeal, and an immortal crown.
- 'Tis God's all animating voice
 which calls thee from on high;
 'Tis his own hand prefents the prize
 to thine aspiring eye.
- 3 That prize, with peerless glories bright, which shall new lustre boast,
 When victors' wreaths, and monarchs' gems, shall blend in common dust.
- 4 My foul, with facred ardour fir'd.
 the glorious prize pursue;
 And meet with joy the high command,
 to bid this earth adieu.

LIV. Christ af ended. Pfal. cvii. 8, &c.

- JESUS, the friend of human kind, with strong compassion mov'd, Descending like a pitying God, to save the souls he loved.
- And now his conquering chariot wheels
 afcend the lofty fkies;
 While broke, beneath his powerful crofs,
 death's iron fceptre lies.
- 3 Exalted high at God's right hand, the Lord of all below; Thro' him is pardoning love dispens'd, and boundless bleffings flow.
- 4 He still for erring, guilty man, a brother's pity shows; And still his bleeding heart is touch'd with memory of our woes.
- LV. Advantages of early religion. Pfal. xxxiv. 11, &c.

 H APPY the man whose early years receive instruction well:

Who hates the finner's path, and fears the road that leads to hell.

When we devote our youth to God,
'tis pleafing in his eyes;
A flower, when offer'd in the bud is no vain facrifice.

3 'Tis easier work if we begin to fear the Lord betimes; While sinners that grow old in sin are harden'd in their crimes.

4 'Twill fave us from a thousand snares, to mind religion young; Grace will preserve our following years, and make our virtue strong.

LVI. Equity. Pfal. xxxvii. 16, &c.

OME, let us fearch our ways, and try,
have we been just and right;
ls the great rule of equity
our practice and delight?

2 What we would have our neighbour do, have we still done the fame? And ne'er delay'd to pay his due, nor injur'd his good name!

3 Do we relieve the poor distress'd?

nor give our tongues a loose.

To make their names our scorn and jest,

nor treat them with abuse?

4 Have we not found our envy grow, to hear another's praise? Nor robb'd him of his honour due, by fly malicious ways?

5 In all we fell, in all we buy, is justice our defign?

Do we remember God is nigh, and fear the wrath divine!

of In vain we talk of Jesus' blood, and boast his name in vain, If we can slight the laws of God, and prove unjust to men. LVII. Prudence. Pfal. ci. 1, &c.

- 'tis a lovely thing to fee a man of prudent heart, Whose thoughts, and lips, and life agree to act a useful part.
- When envy, strife, and wars begin in little angry fouls;
 Mark how the fons of peace come in and quench the kindling coals.
- 3 Their minds are humble, mild, and meek, nor let their fury rife:
 Nor passion moves their lips to speak, nor pride exalts their eyes.
- 4 Such was the Saviour of mankind, fuch pleasures he pursu'd;
 His manners gentle and refin'd, his soul divinely good.

LVIII. Fidelity. Pfal. cxix. 103, &c.

- ET those who bear the Christian name their holy vows fulfil;
 The saints, the followers of the Lamb, are men of honour still,
- 2 True to the folemn oaths they take, though to their hurt they fwear; Constant and just to all they speak, for God and angels hear.
- 3 Still with their lips, their hearts agree, nor flattering words devise.

 They know the God of truth can see through every false disguise.
- They hate the appearance of a lie, in all the shapes it wears;
 Firm to the truth; and when they die, eternal life is theirs.

LIX. Christian Charity.

- BLESS'D is the man, whose fostening heart feels all another's pain; To whom the fupplicating eye was never rais'd in vain.
- 2 Whose breast expands with generous warmth a stranger's woes to feel; And bleeds in pity o'er the wound he wants the power to heal.
- 3 He spreads his kind supporting arms to every child of grief; His fecret bounty largely flows, and brings unask'd relief.
- 4 To him protection shall be shewn, and mercy from above. Descend on those who thus fulfil the perfect law of love.

Right and duty of private judgement.

- MPOSTURE shrinks from light, and dreads a curious eye; Thy doctrines, Lord, the test invite, they bid us fearch and try.
- 2 Lord, to thy word we bring, a meek, inquiring mind; And joyful at falvation's fpring refreshing truth we find.
- 3 With understanding bleft, created to be free, Our faith in man we dare not rest, subject to none but thee.
- 4 The truth once learn'd, impress, with favour on my heart; And help us firmly to profess 'gainst all seducing art.

Humility. LXI.

AS pride, alas, e'er made for man, Blind, erring, guilty creature he; His birth so mean, his life a span, His wisdom less than vanity.

- 2 Jesus, by thy instruction taught, Our foolish passions are repress'd; We blush at our misguided thought, And see and call the humble bless'd.
- 3 To know ourselves, to learn of thee, And bend our necks beneath the throne; Thus dictates wise humility, And makes the wealth of heaven our own.

LXII. Unfruitfulnefs.

- ONG have I fat beneath the found of thy falvation, Lord:
 But still how weak my faith is found, and power of thy word.
- 2 Great God, thy quickening grace impart to give thy law fuccess: Write thy sweet motives in my heart, and fill my soul with bliss.
- 3 Shew my forgetful feet the way
 that leads to joys on high;
 There knowledge grows without decay,
 and love shall never die.

LXIII. The death of Saints.

- HY do we mourn departing friends? or shake when death draws nigh? The messenger which Jesus sends to call them to the sky.
- 2 Why should we tremble to convey their bodies to the Tomb?
 'Twas there the slesh of Jesus lay, and left a long persume.
- 3 Thence he arose, ascending high, and shew'd his slock the way; Up to the Lord our souls shall fly in that same blissful day.

4 O could we die with those that die, and place us in their stead; Then would our spirits soar as high, to converse with the dead.

LXIV. Ascension of Christ.

- SEE how the conqu'ror mounts aloft and to his father flies, By scars of honour made in flesh. with triumph in his eyes!
- 2 There our exalted Saviour reigns, and scatters bleffings down; Our Jesus fills a glorious seat In the majestic throne.
- 3 Raise your thanksgivings, mortal tongues for endless life restor'd;
 Sweet be the accents of your songs to our exalted Lord.
- 4 Bright angels, strike your loudest strings, your lofty voices raise; Let heaven and all created things sound our Redeemer's praise.

LXV. Prosperity from God.

- S HINE on our fouls, eternal God, with rays of favour shine!
 O let thy mercies crown our days, and all their round be thine!
- with thee let every week begin;
 with thee each day be spent;
 For thee each fleeting hour improv'd.
 fince each by thee is lent.
- 3 Thus cheer us thro' life's various scenes till all our labours cease; And heaven refresh our weary souls with everlasting peace.

